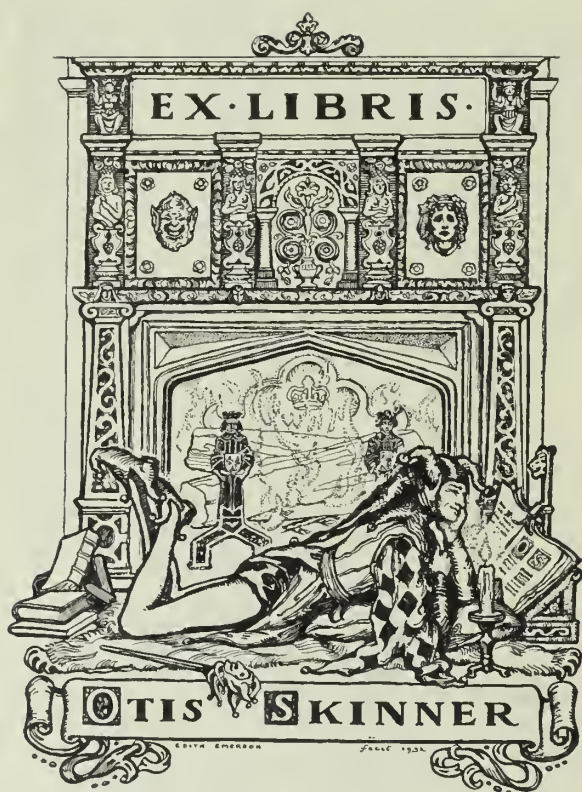
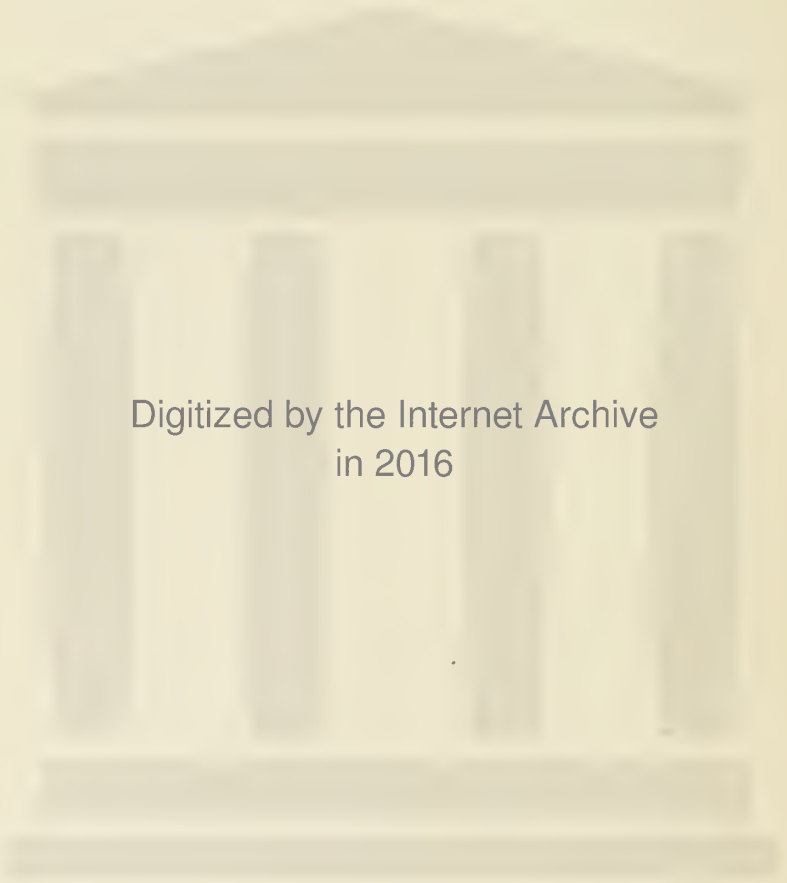


THE HISTORY
OF FASHION





THE
HISTORY OF FASHION
IN FRANCE.



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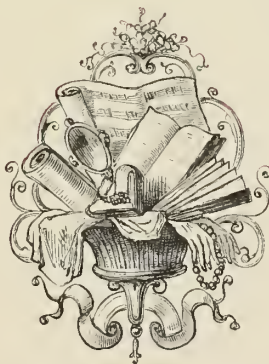
THE DRESS OF WOMEN FROM THE GALLO-ROMAN
PERIOD TO THE PRESENT TIME.

FROM THE FRENCH OF

M. AUGUSTIN CHALLAMEL.

BY

MRS. CASHEL HOEY AND MR. JOHN LILLIE.



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THE HISTORY OF FASHION IN FRANCE.

INTRODUCTION.

Various definitions of fashion—The grave side of its history—Quotations from the poets—Character of Frenchwomen—The refinement of their tastes and fancies—Paris the temple of fashion—The provinces—Mlle. Mars' yellow gown—The causes of fashion—A saying of Mme. de Girardin's—A remark of Mrs. Trollope's—The dress of actresses—Earliest theories of fashion—The Gynæceum of Amman—First appearance of the "Journal des Dames et des Modes"—Lamésangère—Other publications—An anecdote concerning dolls—Plan of the History of Fashion in France.

FASHION is the expositor, from the standpoint of costume, of our habits and our social relations; in a word, of everything appertaining to the charm of life.

Therefore to write the history of female fashion in France is a more serious task than it might seem to be at the first glance. The levity of the subject is mastered by its moral interest. Montesquieu remarks, in his "Lettres Persanes," "A certain lady takes it into her head that she must appear at an assembly in a particular costume; from that moment fifty artisans have to go without sleep, or leisure either to eat or drink. She commands, and is obeyed more promptly than a Shah of Persia, because self-interest is the mightiest ruler upon the earth."

Far from serving only as a source of frivolous talk, even when it is specially concerned with our dress and ornamentation, the subject of fashion, it has been wisely observed, has its value as a

moral sign-post, and supplies the historian, the philosopher, and the novelist with a guide to the prevailing ideas of the time.

Fashion, in fact, acts as a sort of thermometer of the infinitely various tastes of the day, which are influenced by many external circumstances. It is the continuous development of clothing in its thousand varying forms, in its most striking improvements, in its most graceful or most whimsical fancies. The type of dress scarcely changes within the limits of a century ; but its adjuncts and characteristics vary frequently every year.

To the proverb, "Tell me your friends, and I will tell you who you are," might we not add, after serious reflection, "Tell me how such a person dresses, and I will tell you her character"?

Numerous poets have defined Fashion, and for the most part petulantly and disdainfully. One of them says,—

"La mode est un tyran, des mortels respecté,
Digne enfant du dégoût et de la nouveauté."¹

Another adds,—

"Les modes sont certains usages
Suivis des fous, et quelquefois des sages,
Que le caprice invente et qu'approuve l'amour."²

A third remarks with truth, and less severity,—

"Le sage n'est jamais le premier à les suivre,
Ni le dernier à les quitter."³

And La Bruyère asserts that "it shows as much weakness to fly from Fashion as to follow it closely." We must not limit the causes of Fashion to three only,—love of change, the influence of those with whom we live and the desire of pleasing them, and the interests of traders in the transient reign of objects of luxury, so that their place may be supplied with fresh novelties. There remains to be pointed out a fourth and nobler cause ; it is the frequently though not always successful desire to improve the art of dress, to increase its charm, and to advance its progress.

¹ "Fashion is a tyrant, respected by mortals ;
The fitting offspring of distaste and novelty."

² "Fashions are certain usages, invented by caprice, and approved by love, which fools, and sometimes the wise, observe."

³ "The wise man is never the first to follow, nor the last to abandon them."

We do not undertake to relate the history of fashion in male attire, albeit its variations and singularities are by no means less numerous and remarkable than those of the history of fashion for women, which in every age has proved itself both powerful and tyrannical.

We must restrict ourselves to the garments worn by women in each succeeding age, and indeed we must confine ourselves to France alone, if we would achieve as complete a picture as possible of the transformations in female dress from the time of the Gauls to the day on which we shall have accomplished our task.

Grace, vivacity, and, we must add, caprice, are the distinguishing characteristics of Frenchwomen. With some very few exceptions we shall find the qualities or the failings of our charming countrywomen reproduced in their mode of dress. Be she a peasant or a dweller in cities, a working woman or a duchess, every Frenchwoman in town or country reveals herself frankly by the clothes she wears. Her innate desire to please makes her especially object to wear garments of any one particular fashion for long. She is ingenious in devising countless novel accessories to her dress, and adding to its effect. She adorns herself with embroidery, with lace, and with jewels, and, if need be, with flowers, that she may be irresistibly attractive.

A Frenchwoman endeavours to supplement those gifts bestowed upon her by nature by the refinements of the toilet. She maintains that fashion is never ridiculous, because good sense is never wanting in France to curb extravagance, and good taste will ever preserve the harmonious proportions that are an inherent necessity in dress.

It has been said by a woman of tact and observation, "It is perhaps allowable to be sentimental in a sky-blue bonnet, but one must not cry in a pink one."

This remark as to the fitness of dress shows that Frenchwomen are properly attentive to the harmony that should exist between the moral state of a person and the garments suitable for her wear. Mme. Emile de Girardin observes acutely, "There is but one way of wearing a beautiful gown, and that is to forget it."

"Go where you will," wrote (in 1835) the travelled English-

woman Mrs. Trollope, "and you see French fashions, but only in Paris do you see how they should be worn. . . . The dome of the Invalides, the towers of Notre-Dame, the column of the Place Vendôme, the windmills of Montmartre belong to Paris less essentially and less exclusively than the style of a bonnet, a cap, a shawl, a curl, or a glove . . . when worn by a Parisian in the city of Paris."

It is therefore perfectly true to say that a history of fashion in women's dress in France has a singular likeness to a history of the French female character. There exists not a woman, according to Mme. de Genlis, who does not possess at least one secret in the art of dress, and that secret she is sure to keep to herself.

In France, the classic land of fancy, the empire of Fashion has assuredly been more deeply felt than elsewhere. From time immemorial Frenchwomen have altered their fashions each succeeding day. An eminently French poet was thinking of his countrywomen when he composed the following lines, which sum up all that has been said on our present interesting subject :—

" Il est une déesse inconstante, incommode,
Bizarre dans ses goûts, folle en ses ornements,
Qui paraît, fuit, revient, renaît en tous les temps ;
Protégée était son père et son nom est la Mode." ⁴

Now, Proteus the sea-god, in order to escape from questioning upon the future, changed his shape at pleasure.

It might be said that the poet we have just quoted was referring to Parisian ladies in particular ; but this would be a mistake ; for a great number of elegant women reside in the provinces, and have quite as fervent a devotion to the inconstant goddess as their Parisian sisters. In former times Fashion reserved its great effects and its utmost brilliancy for the rich only ; in the present day it pervades every rank of society, and exercises its influence even over the national costume of the peasant ; for a cotton gown will now be cut on the same pattern as a velvet one.

⁴ " There is a goddess, troublesome, inconstant,
Strange in her tastes, in her adornments foolish ;
She appears, she vanishes, she returns at all times and seasons ;
Proteus was her sire, and ' Fashion ' is her name."

All Frenchwomen like perpetual change in dress, and foreigners follow French fashions almost implicitly. Spanish women only, actuated by their national pride, refused for a long time to make any change in their costume, yet even they are now beginning to dress "à la Française."

At present the type of feminine dress always originates in Paris, and spreads thence, throughout France, into the most distant regions of Europe, and even into Asia and America. In both those countries our fashion-books are widely circulated. "Paris," writes a contemporary author, "possesses the undisputed privilege of promulgating sumptuary laws for nations. The fashions of Paris are and will be the fashions of the world; that of which Paris approves will endure; that which Paris condemns must disappear. But for the good taste and the fickleness of Parisians, but for the inventive genius and manual dexterity of their artisans, mankind might be clothed indeed, but never dressed."

And what of womankind? Where is the Frenchwoman, the Englishwoman, the Italian, the German, or the Russian, who does not require her milliner to make her a bonnet on the pattern of those which emanate from a Parisian 'atelier'? "France," as Victor Hugo has said, "will always be in fashion in Europe." Those nations who are least in sympathy with her accept and observe her laws on elegance and 'ton.'

This can be proved by figures. The exportation of articles of fashion manufactured in France reaches a very high figure; our importations of foreign goods of the same kind are, on the contrary, quite insignificant.

The word "fashion" seems to convey to young people an almost absolute sense of novelty. Yet are there distinctions. There is new and new, just as, according to Molière, there are "fagots" and "fagots." That which is new to-day may be but a revival of what is old, a reminiscence of the past. The axiom, "There is nothing new under the sun," applies with special force to Fashion.

What! nothing new? No, absolutely nothing. Who knows whether the pretty trifles, the "mouches" worn by women at the

present day, are not a reproduction or at any rate an imitation of similar adornments once worn by the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, or the Gauls?

The ruffs which are so generally worn at present were in fashion in the time of Henri III. They were then an adjunct to masculine dress; they hold their place now in a lady's wardrobe.

As we study the history of the variations of Fashion in France alone, we perceive that feminine fancy describes an endless circle; that a particular garment is readily cast aside just in proportion as it has been eagerly adopted; that supreme, unjust, and unreasonable contempt succeeds to irresistible attraction.

Fashion changes her idols at times with such rapidity, that one might exclaim with reference to female dress,—

“Je n'ai fait que passer, il n'était déjà plus!”

It frequently happens that the general public will adopt any costume, however eccentric, which has been worn by a celebrated person. That which seemed hideous before the whim of a celebrity induced her to appear in it, becomes the height of fashion immediately afterwards.

We may quote as an instance of this an anecdote that appears in the “Indiscrétions et Confidences” of Audebert, a work published a few years ago.

Mlle. Mars was giving some performances at Lyons, and was not a little astonished, on the day after her first appearance, to receive a morning visit from one of the principal manufacturers in that city.

“Mademoiselle,” said he, “I hope you will pardon the motive of my visit; you can make my fortune.”

“I, monsieur? I should be delighted, but pray tell me how?”

“By accepting this piece of velvet.”

So saying, he spread out on the table several yards of yellow terry velvet. Mlle. Mars began to think she was being “interviewed” by a madman.

“Mon Dieu!” she exclaimed in an agitated voice, “what do you wish me to do with that velvet?”

“To have a gown made of it, mademoiselle. When once you

have been seen in it, everybody will wear it, and my fortune will be made."

"But nobody has ever worn a yellow gown."

"Exactly so; the point is to set the fashion. Do not refuse me, I implore you."

"No, monsieur, I will not refuse you," replied Mlle. Mars. And she moved towards a writing-table on which lay her purse.

"Mademoiselle will not affront me by offering payment. All I ask is that mademoiselle will have the goodness to give the address of my factory, which I may say stands high in reputation."

Mlle. Mars promised, and was delighted to be rid of her visitor. On her return to Paris she saw her dressmaker, and in the course of conversation said, "By-the-bye, I must show you a piece of terry velvet that I have brought back from Lyons; you must tell me how it can be used."

"It is of beautiful quality—quite superfine. But what is to be done with it?"

"It was given to me for a gown."

"A yellow gown! I never sent one out in my life!"

"Well, then, suppose we make the experiment."

"Madame can venture on anything."

A few days later, Mlle. Mars, who had gone early to the theatre, put on the yellow terry velvet gown. When her toilet was finished, she inspected herself in the glass from every point of view, and exclaimed,—

"It is impossible for me to appear on the stage in such a gown!"

Vainly did the manager, vainly did her fellow-actors implore her not to ruin the performance by refusing to appear. Mlle. Mars was obstinate. "She would not," she declared, "look like a canary bird." At length Talma succeeded in persuading her that her dress was in perfect taste, and eminently becoming.

Convinced by his arguments, Mlle. Mars at length ventured, though with some misgiving, on the stage, where she was received with a murmur of admiration. All the ladies inspected

her through their opera-glasses; there was loud applause, and "What a charming gown!" was uttered on all sides.

The next day all Paris was ringing with Mlle. Mars' yellow gown, and the week was hardly over before a similar one was to be seen in every drawing-room. Dressmakers were overwhelmed with work, and from that day yellow has held its own among the colours considered as the right thing for gowns.

A few years later Mlle. Mars revisited Lyons; the manufacturer, whose fortune she had made, gave a splendid fête in her honour, at his charming country house on the banks of the Saône. He had paid for the mansion out of the profits arising from the enormous sale of yellow terry velvet.

How often since Mlle. Mars' time have actresses decisively set the fashion in dress! The Théâtre-Français, the Gymnase, and the Vaudeville have been, as it were, exhibitions, where the feminine world has taken lessons in dress. Who does not recollect Sardou's comedy, "*La Famille Benoîton*," in which for several years there was a continuous show of eccentric costumes?

It must be admitted that actresses, who charm by their genius, their gestures, and their diction, confer on costume all the expression of which it is capable, and lend a significance all their own to the achievements of the mantua-maker.

Is it enough to be brilliantly attired? to be remarkable for eccentricities in dress? to display costumes of the most fantastic kinds? Certainly not. Besides these things the wearer must know how to make the very most of her attire. Fashion and coquetry are twins. It matters not how far we may look back into antiquity, among the Egyptians, the nations of the East, the Greeks, the Romans, or the inhabitants of Gaul, we shall always find these two sisters linked together, giving each other mutual help, and adapting themselves to the climate, to the peculiarities of the soil, and to the passions of the inhabitants.

From earliest childhood our French girls are trained in coquetry by their own parents, innocently enough no doubt, but still such training is not without its dangers.

"Louise," says a mother to her little daughter, "if you are a

good child you shall wear your pretty pink frock on Sunday, or your lovely green hat, or your blue socks," &c. The little girl accordingly is "good," in order to gratify her taste for dress, and her budding love of admiration: both of these qualities will develope as her years increase.

"Cast a glance on the graceful perfection, on the inimitably attractive charm which distinguishes the dress of a Frenchwoman from that of all other women on earth," says a contemporary writer, "and you will soon see a difference between mademoiselle and madame; the very sound of their voices is not the same. The heart and the mental faculties of a young girl seem to be wrapped in slumber, or at any rate dozing, until the day comes when they are to be roused by the marriage ceremony. So long as only mademoiselle is speaking, there is in the tone, or rather in the key of her voice, something limp, monotonous, and insipid; but let madame address you, and you will be fascinated by the charm with which rhythm, cadence, and accentuation can invest a woman's voice."

As we have said, Paris and the whole of France have for a very long time inaugurated the fashions which every other nation has adopted. Yet the first journal especially devoted to fashion was not published in France. One Josse Amman, a painter, who was born at Zurich, and who died at Nuremberg, brought out, in 1586, a charming series of plates on the fashions of his day, under the title of "*Gynæceum, sive Theatrum Mulierum*," &c. ("The *Gynæceum* or Theatre of Women, in which are reproduced by engraving the female costumes of all the nations of Europe"). This work was published at Frankfort, and although it cannot be duly appreciated by women, because it is written in Latin, it must be regarded as the origin of all the Journals of Fashion which have since grown and multiplied.

Under the title, "*Les Modes de la Cour de France, depuis l'an 1675 jusqu'à l'année 1689*," two folio volumes of coloured fashion-plates were published in Paris; but they principally related to special costumes for the courtiers of Louis XIV.; the "city" was treated with contempt, and admiration was reserved for fine "court-

dresses." There was no periodical paper in France, relating to novelties in female dress, before the time of the Directory, in the closing years of the eighteenth century. Until then there had been no development of theories on this interesting subject. Our neighbours imitated our dress, after having visited our salons or our promenades, or they consulted some desultory drawings of costume.

In June 1797, Selléque, in partnership with Mme. Clément, *née* Hémery, founded the "*Journal des Dames et des Modes*." They were joined, in the matter of engraving only, by an ecclesiastic named Pierre Lamésangère, a sober and grave personage, who a few years before had been Professor of Literature and Philosophy at the College of La Flèche, and who by reason of the evil times was embarking on a career very far opposed to that of the Professor's chair. On the death of Selléque, Lamésangère carried on the journal, and made it his chief business from the year 1799.

The "*Journal des Dames et des Modes*" was published at intervals of five days, with a pretty coloured plate of a lady in fashionable dress. On the 15th of each month there were two plates. Lamésangère himself kept the accounts, edited the magazine with as light a touch as possible, and superintended the engraving of the plates. He attended the theatres and all places of public resort in order to observe the ladies' dresses.

So successful was the undertaking that Lamésangère acquired a considerable fortune. His own attire was above criticism. At his death his wardrobe contained a thousand pairs of silk stockings, two thousand pairs of shoes, six dozen blue coats, one hundred round hats, forty umbrellas, and ninety snuffboxes.

Truly a well-provided wardrobe! and greatly exceeding that of a wealthy person at the present day.

The "*Journal des Dames et des Modes*" reigned without a rival for more than twenty years, viz. from 1797 to 1829. It forms an amusing collection of three-and-thirty volumes, and may be consulted with profit both by philosophers and fine ladies.

Some of his contemporaries used to compare Lamésangère to

Alexander. His empire over the world of fashion was as wide as that of Alexander. At his death his kingdom was divided, even as the possessions of the King of Macedonia were. "Le Petit Courrier des Dames," "Le Follet," "La Psyché," and a hundred other fashion-books appeared: among them we must name "La Mode," a journal published under the patronage of the Duchess de Berri, sumptuously printed, and which became a sort of arbiter of fashion in "high life."

At the present day there are innumerable guide-books to Fashion. Women are at no loss for description, history, practical details, or information concerning the business of their toilet. Intelligent minds are daily at work to invent or to perfect the numberless trifles that are either aids or snares to beauty.

In addition to books, albums, and newspapers, Fashion also makes use of dolls for its propaganda. Dolls serve as models to the women of foreign nations, and for a length of time they have played their part in this important matter. In 1391, Isabeau de Bavière, the Queen of Charles VI., made a present of dolls dressed in the latest fashion to the Queen of England; and the books of the Royal Household mention a similar gift from Anne of Brittany to the celebrated Isabella of Castile, Queen of Spain, in 1496.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these gifts of dolls became very frequent. They were so highly valued, that during the terrible war of the Succession in Spain between the English and French, the Cabinets of Versailles and of St. James's granted a free pass for an alabaster doll, which, with dress and hair arranged in the newest fashion of the Court of France, conveyed our latest novelties across the Channel.

Like Dandin, the judge in "Les Plaideurs," who begs Intimé the lawyer to "pass on to the deluge" so as to escape his lecture on the creation of the world, our fair readers must hope that we are not about to begin our history with the origin of our country.

But while we restrict ourselves within proper limits, it is not

possible to avoid speaking of the dress of the most remote ancestresses who are known to us, of the women of Gaul and Roman-Gaul.

We must, for a short space, return to those far-off ages, because certain attributes of dress which existed of old have re-appeared at different times, and at the very date at which we write, more than one Gallic or Gallo-Roman fashion may be recognized in the garments or the head-dresses of our country-women.

We therefore ask permission to dwell for a short time on the earlier centuries of our history. Then the Merovingian period will supply us with curious documents. The Carlovingians and the early branches of the family of Capet will claim a larger share of our attention. Finally we shall dwell on the Middle Ages, and the period of the Renaissance, which were remarkable for luxury, love of wealth, and splendour of Art, and so we shall pass on to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, over which Fashion reigned an absolute monarch.

The Revolution of 1789, the Empire, the Restoration, the Monarchy of July, the Second Empire—in a word, Contemporary History as it is called, will bring us to 1881, and the fashions of which our fair readers can judge for themselves: we have no intention of taking a place among archæologists, or arraying a multitude of historical notes before them. Moreover documents are few, and even if we wished to relate our story in full, it would not be possible, since we are bound to observe the limits of historical truth. We may, indeed, endeavour to present it in a pleasant light, but we must not change its natural expression.

CHAPTER I.

THE GALLIC AND GALLO-ROMAN PERIOD.

Gallic period—Woad, or the pastel—Tunics and *boulgètes*—"Mavors" and "Palla"—Cleanliness of the Gallic women—The froth of beer or *kourou*—The women of Marseilles; their marriage-portions—Gallo-Roman period—The Roman garment—The *stola*—Refinement of elegance—Extravagant luxury of women—Artificial aids—A vestiaire or wardrobe-room of the period—Shoes—Jewels and ornaments—The amber and crystal ball—Influence of the barbarians.

WE learn with horror from ancient writers that certain women of Gaul were accustomed to dye their skin with a whitish matter, procured from the leaves of the woad or pastel, a cruciform plant from which is derived a starchy substance, that may be substituted for indigo for certain purposes. Others were tattooed in almost the same manner as the savages of America.

Such were our mothers in primitive Gaul, a country which differed little in extent from modern France.

But time did its work, and a little later, when the inhabitants began to practise industrial arts, the costume of a Gallic woman consisted of a wide plaited tunic and of an apron fastened round the hips. She would sometimes wear as many as four tunics, one over the other, a mantle, part of which veiled her face, and a "mitre" or Phrygian cap. She made use also of pockets or of leathern bags, and of "bouls" or "boulgètes," made of network, which are still in use in Languedoc, and are called "reticules."

Rich women remarkable for their beauty and elegance adorned themselves with many-coloured linen mantles, fastening with a clasp on the shoulder; or else they were entirely unclothed to the waist, and draped themselves in a large mantle, which floated over their skirts, and was kept in its place by a clasp or fibula of gold or silver, greatly resembling the modern brooch.

A veil covered the head and bosom ; when short, it was called a 'mavors;' when long, falling for instance to the feet, it bore the name of 'palla.'

The cleanliness of the Gallic women, which has been praised by historians, added another charm to their unrivalled natural beauty. No Gallic woman, whatever her rank, would have consented or even ventured to wear dirty, untidy, or torn garments ; nor did any one of them fail to frequent the baths which were established everywhere, even in the very poorest localities. The Gallo-Roman woman was admired for her fair complexion, her tall and elegant figure, and her beautiful features ; and she neglected nothing that might tend to procure her that homage. Cold bathing, unguents for the face and often for the entire body were to her a delight, a duty, and a necessity. In order to preserve the freshness of her complexion, she bathed her face in the froth of beer or *kourou*, dyed her eyebrows with tallow, or with a juice taken from the sea-pike, a fish found on the coast of Gaul. She made frequent use at her toilet of chalk dissolved in vinegar, a mixture injurious to health, but very efficacious as a pommade ; she coloured her cheeks with vermilion, put lime on her hair, which she covered with a net, or plaited it into narrow bands, either throwing it back or giving it the curve of a helmet.

Her luxury was not limited to ornaments only, to necklaces, bracelets, rings, or waistbands of metal ; she borrowed her charms from Nature too, and, as we have seen, had little reason to complain. Bracelets, which still held their place under the Merovingians, do not seem to have been worn in the Middle Ages.

In the south, on the shores of the Mediterranean, the women were strikingly beautiful. They wore a quantity of jewels, a short garment reaching only to the knees, and a gorgeously bright red apron, such as is worn by the Neapolitans to this day.

At Marseilles the civilization of the Greeks had spread among the people. The young girls of the city were always dressed with elegance, and, doubtless lest drink might impair the ivory white of their complexion, custom forbade them to partake of wine ; also in order to guard against an excess of luxury, the law required

that the highest marriage-portion of a woman should not exceed one hundred golden crowns, nor her finest ornaments five hundred crowns. And that arbitrary law seems to have been strictly enforced.

After the conquest of Gaul by Cæsar, Roman civilization and Roman corruption were introduced into our country.

It is difficult to resist the attractions of beautiful things, and however great may have been the hatred of their husbands towards the conquerors, the Gallic women, now become Gallo-Romans, were very ready, as may easily be imagined, to follow the example of the ladies from Italy. They declined to be beaten in the art of pleasing, as their warriors had been vanquished on the battle-field.

The fair Gallo-Roman adopted the fashions of Rome. Extravagance in dress became boundless, and dissimilarity of garments denoted various degrees of wealth. The "stola," a tunic reaching to the ground, and gathered by a girdle round the hips, while a band adjusted it to the bosom, allowed only the tips of the feet to be seen. It fell in numerous rich folds, and was as characteristic of the matron as was the "toga" of a citizen of Rome.

One lady might be satisfied with a chemise, with the wide drapery of the tunic scalloped at the edge, a short apron and sandals; while another would load herself with tunics, the upper one being sleeveless, sometimes embroidered and sometimes not, confined by a band round the waist, and by a clasp on either shoulder. A sort of mantilla veiled the entire figure.

Some few ladies chose to wear garments which on account of their great breadth were called "palissades" by Horace, the satirical poet of the Augustan age.

From these the first idea of those vertugadins and crinolines, which we shall frequently be called upon to notice in the course of the present history, appears to have been derived.

An elegant town lady would also adorn herself with a mantle that half covered her head, and with the "pallium," a golden tissue without either clasps or pins, thrown across the left shoulder and round the figure. Another would, like a Gallic woman, wear the Phrygian cap, which allowed her beautiful hair to be seen and

admired. This was fastened back with the "vitta," a ribbon or band which only patricians had the right to use, crossed with narrow bands or confined in a net, and arranged with much skill. The hair was frequently dyed red or yellow; or brown plaits would be concealed under the fair locks taken from some German slave, and lightly sprinkled with gold-dust.

The face of a Gallo-Roman lady was resplendent in beauty, thanks to the refined arts of dress, and her complexion remained incomparably fair in spite of the lapse of years. Beneath the tunic she wore the "strophium," a sort of corset which defined the figure, and in which she could carry her letters. Ovid observes that to equalize the shoulders, if one were rather higher than the other, it was sufficient to drape lightly the lower of the two. Thus did "postiches" and padding originate.

The Gallo-Roman lady soon began to make use of the "sudarium" or pocket-handkerchief, a piece of stuff, either plain or embroidered, which she held in her hand to wipe the damp from her forehead, or to use as we use our handkerchiefs. We can imagine her leaving her gilded chariot, a sort of palanquin whose shafts were supported by a pair of horses, mules, or oxen. This was a closed carriage lined with skins and strewn with straw, and the noble lady lay within it, softly reposing on a "pulvinar," or large silken cushion scented with roses. She had adopted the manners, if not the morals of the East. She could appreciate and admire and amass rings of gold, silver ornaments for her dressing-table, for the bath-room, for travelling; mirrors, earrings of incrustated glass, rings, and necklaces. She made use of many different perfumes: scented and hygienic pomatums, essence of lilies, roses, and myrrh, unguents made from the cock and from pure spikenard. She delighted in waistbands and ribbons, in cushions, furs, and felt,—in one word, in all the luxuries that contribute to cleanliness and elegance. She had a decided taste for showy colours.

The wardrobe of a Gallic-Roman lady would consist of tissues of linen, cotton, or silk, taking the place of the modern chemise; of a sort of boneless corset to support the bosom, of a dressing-

gown, of robes of ceremony, of tunics, half tunics, and violet-coloured mantles, shaped much like a modern pelerine. A Frenchwoman of the present day has not a better assorted wardrobe.

On going out Gallic-Roman ladies donned a short mantle, which covered their shoulders, and a scarf for their head, the light and transparent veil of which their head-dress was composed sparkled with gold and silver spangles, mingled with narrow bands, ribbons, and beads. They left their pointed and cork-soled slippers, turned up at the toes and without heels, at home. Similar shoes may be seen to this day in the Museum at Clermont, in Auvergne.

Whenever an elegant patrician lady left her home to take a drive or pay visits, she changed her shoes. Sandals took the place of the "lancia," or house-slippers. She sometimes wore the "cothurnus," a walking-boot, unrivalled, except by the light shoes called "campodes," habitually worn by the peasant women. Shoes were marks of distinction. For instance, those called "peribarides" denoted that the Gallo-Roman lady, their wearer, belonged to one of the highest families.

In Gaul, as in Rome, extravagance in jewels and ornaments defied all the sumptuary laws, although the latter were as plentiful as they were useless. Gallo-Romans would not be denied their gold and silver ornaments.

Cameos and engraved stones, emeralds, amethysts, sapphires, and the finest pearls give immense value to the necklaces, rings, bracelets, large circular earrings, and even garters, of that remote period. Garters, we beg to point out, were not used to keep up stockings, which were not worn in those times, but served to confine a sort of trouser of fine linen. Some of the Gallo-Roman ladies wore these garters or anklets on the bare leg, as they wore bracelets on the arm.

Parasols, steel mirrors, fans—all these things were known to the Gallo-Roman period. Perfumers were constantly making fresh discoveries, and there were dentists who manufactured marvellous false teeth, so as "to repair the irreparable injuries of

Time." Any defects in the face were remedied by drugs of all kinds. The eyelids were stained in order to give brilliancy to the eyes.

At least twenty women were in the service of each patrician lady, and the latter always devoted much time and thought to her dress. These women attired her with exceeding care; they were admirable hair-dressers, and used pomatum profusely. One was the proud bearer of a parasol. A Roman fashion, borrowed from the Egyptians, prescribed that slaves should carry in silver or golden nets the amber and crystal balls used by their mistresses.

With what grace and skill did these noble ladies twist and press the crystal balls in their fingers at a public fête, or at the circus or theatre! They subdued by this means the excessive warmth of their hands, and secured a constant coolness. When the crystal ball became heated, it was succeeded by one of amber, which as it warmed gave forth a most delightful odour.

In like manner the fan offered opportunities for the Gallo-Roman ladies to display all their grace and skill, and the fan has retained its place down to our own time, while it has found an historian in M. Blondel, who has published a very curious monograph on fans among ancient and modern peoples.

The Gauls of both sexes had a patriotic love of their national costume, which they would not discard even when travelling in Asia. Nevertheless, they did not refuse to learn from their Roman conquerors, whose advanced civilization took gradual hold of our ancestors, and ended by metamorphosing them.

Did they borrow something from the costumes of the Vandals, Huns, Goths, and Burgundians, from the various barbarians who appeared in succession on the soil of Gaul? We may believe that they did, for the women who accompanied those wild invaders must have left everywhere behind them some trace of their passage. As they sat making their garments in their tents, they must have inspired the Gallo-Roman women with a wish to imitate this or that accessory of the toilet, so soon as the terror caused by the presence of the soldiery had passed away. And though some of these strangers wore only the skins of beasts, others were accus-

tomed to "the purple," and to tissues from the East; some few combined Greek elegance with Latin wealth, and were covered with valuable ornaments.

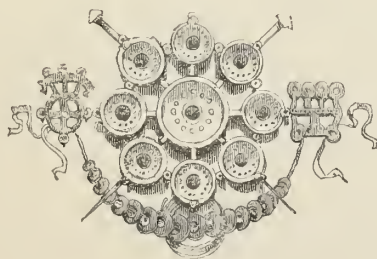
The Visigoths mingled with the peoples of Southern Gaul, and the women were sufficiently civilized to be not displeasing to the vanquished.

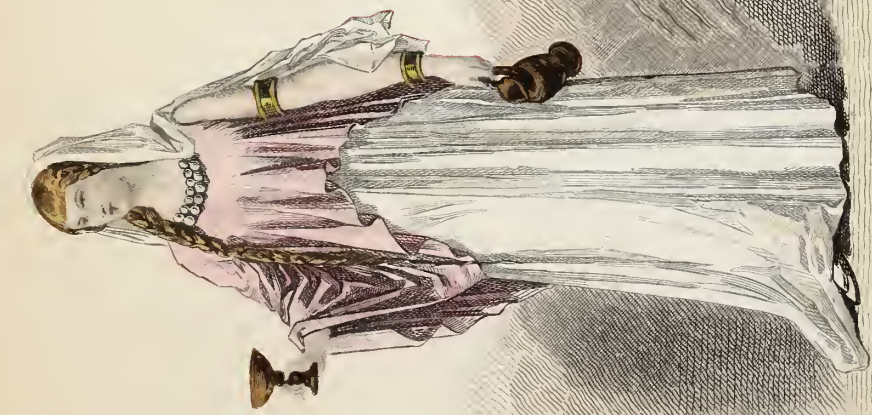
At Toulouse, where the Gothic kings had fixed their abode, a large and splendid court, which was destined to exercise an undisputed sway during many centuries, had risen round them.

The Burgundians, who had established themselves between the banks of the Lake of Geneva and the confluence of the Moselle and the Rhine, looked upon the Gallo-Romans not as subjects, but as brethren; nor did their laws forbid marriage between themselves and the inhabitants of a conquered country. They evidently followed more or less slowly the progress of civilization in Gaul, and their manners and customs and even their dress influenced and were influenced in their turn by those of the inhabitants of the occupied country.

It may be that no history of the art of Dress will ever be verified by the documents necessary for the accurate reconstruction of the details of female costume from the first invasion of the barbarians until the last, that of the Franks, of which we are now about to note the most striking effects.

Such lapses are to be regretted, but they could not be filled up without venturing on unfounded hypotheses or unsupported fancy. It is better to restrict ourselves to the exact truth than to change the pen of history for that of romance.

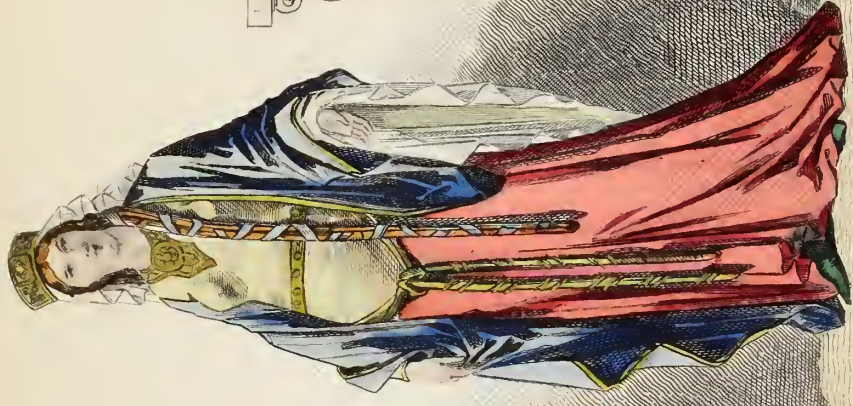




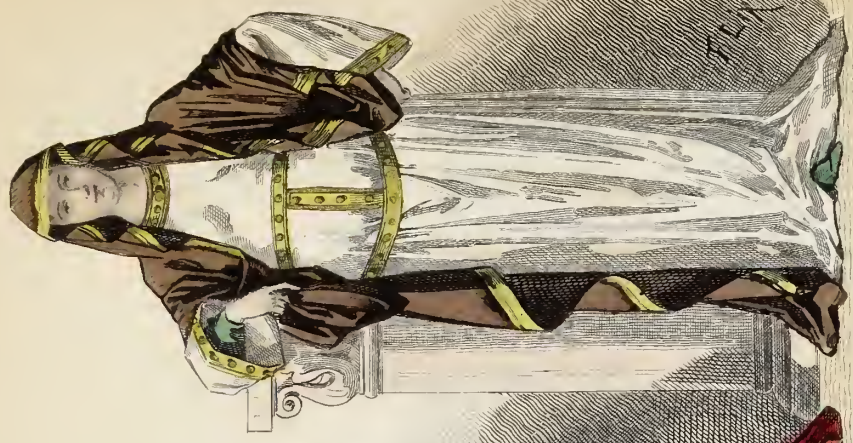
GALLIC



GAUL-ROMAN



MEROVINGIAN



CARLOVINGIAN

E. Coudy

CHAPTER II.

THE MEROVINGIAN PERIOD.

428 TO 752.

Modifications in female dress after the Invasion of the Franks—Customs of the latter—The Merovingians—Costumes of skins and felt ; cloaks and camlets—The coif, the veil, the skull-cap, the “guimpe,” the cape—Fashionable Merovingian ladies adorn themselves with flowers—Various articles of dress—The “suint”—Young girls dress their hair without ornaments—St. Radégonde—The hair of married women.

THE influence of political events on costume is more decisive than is generally supposed. Cæsar’s conquest of Gaul had greatly modified the dress of the Gallic women. After the invasions of the barbarians, and when the Franks had snatched the most vivacious region of our country from the Romans, a material change took place in the dress of the women.

Former invasions had generally been of a temporary nature, but the invasion of the Franks was of a permanent character. This rendered it highly important in regard to the moral life of the population. The Franks, like the Romans at an earlier period, made a real conquest of our country, in which they founded a different state of society from that which had been established by Cæsar and his successors. The rough, not to say ferocious manners of the north crossed the Rhine together with the bold and indomitable warriors whose adventurous exploits have been made known to us by history, and both private and public life felt their influence.

The Frankish woman, who was large and coarsely built, wore a long black gown, or a gown edged with scarlet, but her arms were bare and her bosom was uncovered. She crowned her head with flowering gorse, and would rush fully armed into the bloody fray. At times inspired, or filled with the spirit of prophecy, she sang

the deeds of father, husband, or son, or recounted the victories of the confederacy. She resembled the other Allemanni women in her dreamy creed and gentle superstitions, and she possessed quiet energy and comparative sociability which enabled her to triumph over obstacles. While holding tenaciously to many primitive customs she was not altogether averse to innovations, nor to art, industries, and southern civilization. She held her place admirably at the court of Clovis, who, as tradition informs us, liked to dispense his favours and had a taste for magnificence.

No sooner were the Franks firmly established this side of the Rhine, on the northern and eastern territories, than the rusticity of the Germans began to blend with the refinements of the Latin race, and in some cases to counteract the elements of corruption in the latter. The customs of the Franks took root among the Gallo-Romans, and for a time the smaller details of dress disappeared, or at least held their place with the utmost difficulty.

During the first period of the Merovingian monarchy, both men and women were clothed in the skins of animals. At times both sexes would wear garments of felt, or narrow, short-sleeved silken mantles, dyed red or scarlet, or garments of a coarse material made from camels' hair and thence named camlet. Camlet was sometimes woven with a silk warp.

Generally speaking, the women covered their heads with coifs, not unlike the ancient mitres that originated in Persia, or they wore a linen or cotton veil, ornamented with gold and gems, and drew the end of the right side over the left shoulder. But the Frankish women proper wore a small skull-cap called an "obbou." Any person who knocked this cap off rudely was mulcted in a heavy fine by the Salic law. Respect towards woman was enforced by Franks and Germans alike.

Queen Clotilde is frequently represented as wearing a tunic, confined round the waist by a band of some precious material. Her mantle is laced together across the breast, and her hair falls in a long plait. Later than this, St. Radégonde wore a sort of "guimpe" called "sabanum," made of lawn, rudely embroidered in gold, if we may credit Fortunat the poet, who was frequently in

her company. After her conversion the Queen of Clotaire I. followed the fashions of the barbarians. Six years after her marriage she withdrew from the court, in order to devote herself to religious exercises, diversified by literary pursuits.

The Merovingian women were partial to many-coloured tunics, to embroideries, to flowered stuffs, and to a sort of cape known to them of old. This consisted of a piece of striped material of circular shape, with an aperture for the head and two holes for the arms; it covered the chest and shoulders, and was fastened by strings round the loins. They wore two belts, one above and the other below the bust. Their arms were bare, as it was the custom of dwellers on the banks of the Rhine.

Sometimes—an instance is supplied by Ultrogothe, the wife of Chilbert—they made use of a large mantle, a sort of chlamys, fastened at the throat or on the right shoulder by a clasp.

If to this we add an “escarcelle” or purse, in which kings and queens carried coins to distribute to the poor, my readers will have an exact idea of the female dress of the time.

In such costumes the fair Merovingians were wanting neither in charm, nor dignity, nor in a certain modest elegance. They probably borrowed some details of attire from the Gallo-Roman fashions and added them to their own.

Bishop Fortunat, a Latin poet of that day, who was present at the wedding of Siegbert and Brunehilde, alludes to the custom his countrywomen had adopted of wreathing their hair with sweet-smelling flowers. Another bishop and historian, Gregory of Tours, who from his position was also well acquainted with the customs of the Merovingian court, speaks of silken robes, which he describes as splendid.

Every wealthy woman loaded herself with jewels. They wore pearl necklaces, jacinths, diamonds, gowns with long trains, mantles, tunics, hoods, veils, and casques; earrings, bracelets, necklets, and rings; stomachers and belts of woollen, linen, or silk.

Their dresses on festive occasions sparkled with gold and jewels. St. Gregory of Nazianzen rebuked them for their innumerable

perfumed plaits of hair, yet they knew of one pommade only—"suint," an animal grease which proceeds from the skin of the sheep and clings to its wool. Such a perfume would be nauseous to the women of our day, but it was much liked by the Frankish women, either for its novelty, or from its efficaciousness in giving smoothness to the skin.

A MS. of 660 gives the picture of a Merovingian lady wearing her hair smoothly parted on the brow and hanging down in two thick plaits, lessening in size as they fall over her shoulders. A fluted diadem of gold, placed like a crown on the head, confines the hair, and imparts to the pictured form a certain air of majesty.

Young girls, with whom it was customary to wear their hair flowing loosely, were permitted no ornaments on the head. This was so general a custom that if as they grew older they remained unmarried, they were said to "wear their hair." The beautiful Radégonde, after the murder of her brother by her husband Clotaire I., received permission from the tyrant to withdraw from the world. As a mark of humility she placed on the altar her diadems, bracelets, clasps of precious gems, fringes, and golden and purple tissues. Then she broke in twain her belt of massive gold. The sacrifice was consummated; Radégonde belonged to God alone. She died in the odour of sanctity at the monastery of Sainte-Croix, which she had founded at Poitiers.

One of the councils forbade married women to cut their hair, as a symbol of their subjection to their husbands. But this prohibition did not cure them of their vanity; they might still plait their hair with ribbons, and wear it parted in the middle and falling in two wide plaits, like that of Swiss peasants at the present day.

Numerous statues have preserved for us this Merovingian fashion, which was not wanting in grace, while it conferred on women an appearance of severe simplicity, less majestic than that of the figure I have described in speaking of a manuscript of the seventh century.



CAROLINGIAN COSTUME
10th to 11th Century

HISTORY OF FASHION

CAROLINGIAN COSTUME
10th to 11th Century

CHAPTER III.

THE CARLOVINGIAN PERIOD.

752 TO 987.

Reign of Charlemagne—The women of the tenth century wear two tunics—Judith's belt—A veil is obligatory—Miniatures in the Mazarin Library—Charles the Bald's Bible—Shoes—Dress of Queen Lutgarde—Dress of Rotrude and Bertha—Gisla and other kinswomen of the Emperor—The successors of Charlemagne—Cannes—Adelaide of Vermandois—The dress of widows.

THE reign of Charlemagne, and the passing away of the first race of our kings, to be succeeded by the second, made no essential difference as to dress. We cannot, in fact, ascribe much importance to the German and Byzantine influences which succeeded each other at that period, but did not destroy what we may denominate the Gallo-Roman style.

The most elegant dress of a woman in the tenth century consisted of two tunics of different colours, one with long, the other with short sleeves; on the feet were boots laced up in front. Wide bands of embroidery bordered the throat, sleeves, and lower edge of the skirt. The waist-band was placed just above the hips. This belt was generally of great value, being studded with gold and jewels. The belt belonging to Judith, wife of Louis le Débonnaire, weighed three pounds. At the present day there are no waist-bands either of that weight or value.

The Carolingian women wore splendidly embroidered veils, covering the head and shoulders, and reaching almost to the ground. This lent a character of severity to the costume, which was especially aimed at by the women of that period. The veil was indispensable, being regarded as the penalty of the sin of our Mother Eve, and the hair was concealed beneath it.

Among the admirable miniatures in the Mazarin Library, there is one of a queen wearing a triangular diadem, and a veil falling on either side over the shoulders. The under-tunic is black, the upper, in the style of a mantle, is violet. Both are bordered with yellow, her shoes are yellow also, and borderings and shoes alike were probably ornamented with gold.

In the celebrated Bible of Charles the Bald, a most curious historical treasure, there are paintings of four women wearing the chlamys in different colours.

The chlamys is always white, with sleeves of gold brocade, with one exception, when it is rose-coloured. The under-garments are bright orange, light brown, light blue, and violet, with pale blue sleeves, trimmed with strips of red embroidery on bands of a gold ground.

We find that gold was used everywhere and always, and while making due allowance for the imagination of the artist, his pictures throw light on the costumes of the period.

Observe that the four women all wear shoes, not boots.

The historian has in general but scanty material with which to trace the dress of the princesses and ladies of the court under the Carolingians, on account of the many wars both civil and foreign that took place between the time of Charlemagne and that of Charles the Simple.

Still less do we know concerning the dress of the women of the people, for on that point history is almost silent. We learn, however, that their skirts were extremely long, and that they wore veils much resembling the veil of nuns, but thicker, and hanging more closely round the figure.

Among women of noble rank the love of dress harmonized with the taste for needlework displayed by the kinswomen of Charlemagne, as recorded by the old chroniclers.

They worked with their own hands on silk and wool, but this did not prevent them from loving and seeking to acquire magnificent possessions, splendid ornaments and trimmings of excessive richness. The Empress Judith, mother of Charles the Bald, was considered to have great skill in embroidery. She gave to her

godchild, the Queen of Denmark, a gown made by herself and adorned with gold and gems. The ladies excelled in the manufacture of small articles, such as bags, scarfs, sleeves, and belts.

Narrow purple bands were plaited in Queen Luitgarde's beautiful hair, and encircled her brow of dazzling fairness. Cords of gold held together her chlamys, a splendid mantle thrown over her right shoulder. A beryl, that clear and precious stone of bluish green, was set in her diadem. Her gown was of fine linen, dyed purple; her neck sparkled with jewels.

Rotrude, the eldest daughter of Charlemagne, wore a mantle with a clasp of gold and precious stones. Violet bands were plaited with her luxuriant fair hair. A golden coronet diapered with gems as beautiful as those in the clasp of her mantle encircled her brow, and gave her a truly queen-like look. Rotrude had been promised in marriage to the Emperor Constantine, who had heard of her beauty from beyond seas and mountains.

Bertha, another of Charlemagne's daughters, who was married secretly to Angilbert, a disciple of Alcuin, and a member of the Palatine school, wore her hair confined in a golden fillet, and her head-dress was as impressive as that of her sister. Yellow-green chrysolites sparkled on the gold leaves with which her garments were embroidered.

Gisla, the best known of the great Emperor's kinswomen, wore a purple striped veil, and a dress dyed with the stamens of the marsh-mallow or "mauve."

Rhodaide rode on a superb horse; a gold bodkin set with jewels fastened her flowing silken chlamys.

The mantle of Théodrade was hyacinth, and trimmed with moleskin; beads of foreign fabric shone on her beautiful throat; on her feet she wore the Greek cothurnus, like the Byzantine women.

Such are the descriptions given us by writers of the period, from whom we also learn that the Carolingian ladies wore but one girdle, placed very low. The materials of their gowns were

frequently transparent, revealing the shoulders, arms, and lower limbs, and the gowns themselves were somewhat clinging, so that the graceful undulating movement of the body was visible, as in the antique times.

These transparent materials disappeared by degrees under the successors of Charlemagne, and women's dress became heavier and more ample. Long veils were worn.

Under the last Carolingians the splendour and elegance of female dress declined. Ladies began to wear extremely simple hoods and copes. They retained the habit of being delicately shod, shoes being for the most part black and embroidered in beads. Were they already aware of the important part played by shoes in the elegant appearance of a woman?

Carlovingian ladies frequently made use in their walks of a cane, ornamented at the top by a bird; the use of a stick lessening their fatigue and imparting uprightness to the figure.

If we may judge by the statue of Adelaide de Vermandois, the widow of Count Geoffrey of Anjou, surnamed "Grisgonelle," who died in 987, the dress of aged women in the tenth century was somewhat as follows:—A mantle was worn over a wide-sleeved gown, under which appeared another garment, with close-fitting sleeves, buttoning at the wrist. A "guimpe" covered the upper part of the bust, encircled the throat and was joined to the veil, which, arranged in two large pads over the ears, presented a strange appearance.

We may conclude by saying that the women of that period preferred a rich but severe style of dress. Tightly fitting gowns displayed the slenderness of the waist. Their ornaments, sometimes of inestimable value, had none of the gaudiness that afterwards disfigured the dress of the noble court ladies. Intrinsic value in jewels was much appreciated, and they were worn, according to a Byzantine fashion, fastened to the dress of which they appeared to form part. For a long time past jewels had been worn attached to the sides of the circlet or coronet, and falling over the hair as low as the shoulders.

It is noticeable that the garb of widows resembled that of our nuns. Ten centuries have scarcely changed its principal characteristics.

We learn from the romances of chivalry that to have the insteps of the hose cut open was a sign of mourning, and that damosels and the people of their suite would make a vow as a mark of mourning to put on their garments "the wrong side out." Widows of the highest rank wore their gowns high up to the throat, and wrapped themselves in a veil.

The fashion of their head-dress was an important point with Carlovingian ladies. If of noble birth they wore their hair long, falling behind the ears over the shoulders, and reaching below the waist. It was curled or waved on the forehead. Their earrings were short pendants ending in a pearl.

Like the Germans, they united to a love of dress a love of cleanliness, and were accustomed to make use of the bath, either at the public establishments, or in their own villas, which were provided with every necessary for their daily wants. In these respects certain customs of the East had rather gained than lost ground, and this in spite of the prohibitions of the Catholic Church, which sought to prevent scandals, or exaggerated practices hurtful to the public health.

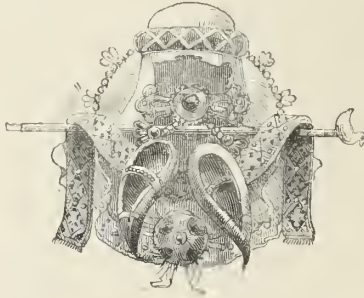
But it would be a great mistake to imagine that baths were taken during the Carlovingian period in splendidly decorated halls like those of the Romans; statues, paintings, and mosaics were alike absent.

The thermæ of Julian on the left bank of the Seine, of which the ruins remain to this day in the Hôtel de Cluny on the Boulevards St. Michel and St. Germain, included gardens, porticoes, nay, even an immense palace, in which many kings and queens of the earliest race took up their abode, and in all probability made use of its baths. Childebert, for instance, set up his court there with Ultrogothe and his daughters.

But with these exceptions no Merovingian or Carlovingian king has possessed baths of such size. It is almost certain that the great lords and ladies built no large bathing establishments in

connexion with their private dwellings; on the other hand, their toilet apparatus, plate, brushes, fine towels, and other articles were often of very great value. The bath itself was of wood, marble, or stone.

The public baths served as a place of meeting, where the news of the day might be ascertained, and business and pleasure discussed.





CAPETIAN COSTUMES
Second half of the 10th Century

HISTORY OF FASHION

CAPETIAN COSTUMES
11th Century

Goussier imp. Paris

CHAPTER IV.

THE CARLOVINGIAN PERIOD.

987 TO 1270.

Earliest times of the Carolingian period—Variety of costume in the provinces—Fashions in the Duchy of France—French taste dating from the eleventh century—Luxury increases with each generation—The dominical—The “bliaud”—Canes of apple-wood—Women in the twelfth century—Head-dresses—“Aliche”—Serpent-tails—Pelisses—The thirteenth century—“Grèves” and veils are in fashion—The “couvre-chef” in the fourteenth century—The skirt, or “cotte-hardie,” surcoat, or overall, or overskirt, cape, trained skirt, and “gauzape”—Accessories—Emblazoned gowns—Various kinds of stuffs.

By degrees, according as the nation acquired unity, and France was in process of self-construction, dress became more original and more special. The remembrance of the Roman occupation and the influences of the barbaric invasion were visibly fading away. Gallo-Roman, Frankish, and German women no longer dwelt on the soil of our country, their place was taken by Frenchwomen of feudal times and of the middle ages, whose nationality became every day more decided. These were our real ancestresses, who neither in their dress nor in their homes were content to follow the fashions of antiquity.

From the accession of the Capet family until the Renaissance, variety in dress became developed in all those western provinces that were destined to be welded at a later period into one homogeneous France. In Brittany, Burgundy, Flanders, Gascony, and Provence, the women adopted a costume of their own, adding to one general principle of form a number of details. Some of these still exist at the present day, but it would be too tedious to describe them.

The Duchy of France, which formed the kernel of our modern France, will suffice to afford us an exact idea of olden fashions ;

just as Paris is nowadays the great centre and starting-point of every innovation in the toilet of our fair contemporaries.

Dress, fashion, and luxury varied considerably from and after the eleventh century. William, Archbishop of Rouen, caused a Council of the Church to be held in 1096. At this council it was decreed that men wearing long hair should be excluded from the Church during life, and that after death prayer should not be offered for their souls.

Taste in France became improved through the commercial relations existing with the East, and the rudimentary style of dress of the two earlier races was succeeded by something more artistic, and more easily adapted to the art of chivalry. Women adorned their brows with bands of jewels, wreaths of roses, or golden nets.

It is no exaggeration to say that each succeeding generation saw greater attention paid to dress by both men and women, the latter especially; that caprice began to show itself in those curious eccentricities which still afford us food for laughter, and that luxury reigned in consequence over all the population, in spite of the efforts of those in authority, who endeavoured to regulate the tastes of all classes by sumptuary laws.

There are many miniatures of women of rank in the eleventh century, in which they are represented as wearing a mantle and veil. The latter was called a "dominical," because it was usually worn at the services of the Church on Sundays. Women were bound to wear this veil when receiving Holy Communion. According to the synodical statutes women who were without their veil were obliged to defer their Communion until the following Sunday. At the moment of receiving the Sacred Host they held one end of the "dominical" in the left hand.

A crown or a diadem encircled the veil of queens and princesses. Widows wore, in addition, a bandeau covering the forehead and fitting round the face so as to hide the throat and neck. They wore no jewels, not even rings. The veil of a lady of gentle birth reached to her feet, but that of a plebeian might not fall below the waist.

In the eleventh century women also wore "bliauds," a sort of gown reaching to the feet, with deep folds on either side, but scanty in front and behind. The shape of the "bliaud" was afterwards altered, and long sleeves were used in place of half sleeves. For travelling they might wear the "garde-corps," a long dress, open for a short distance from the edge of the skirt in front, and with long wide sleeves; these they often did not use as such, and in that case they hung loosely at the sides.

They also made use of walking-sticks of apple-wood, such as had been used in earlier times by the Frankish warriors. It is recorded that Constance, the second wife of King Robert, knocked out the eye of her confessor with one of these canes. The Carolingian women, as we have seen, had also made use of walking-sticks.

From the beginning of the twelfth century many women wore round their head a simple ribbon, ornamented with flowers or embroideries in the case of the court ladies, who wore besides either a sort of chin-cloth surrounding the face, or a "claque-oreille"—i.e. a hat with falling brims.

Women of the people wore veils or cloth hoods; those of high rank hoods of velvet. These head-dresses were very becoming to Frenchwomen, who altered them but slightly in the progress of time. In addition to these, we remark in old illuminated MSS. head-dresses of hair only, a very simple and yet elegant style.

From 1130 to 1140, women of noble rank divided their hair into two thick plaits, falling in front of the shoulders, or, parting it as before, they fastened the two long locks together by means of narrow bands of silk or of gold tissue. Such hair-dressing as this required much care and attention. Long plaits remained in fashion until about 1170, when our countrywomen began to conceal their hair under a veil, or by a band passing under the chin and fastened on the crown of the head, while the hair was gathered together in a chignon at the nape of the neck.

At the same period they preferred plaques to necklaces. They wore these plaques on the chest as brooches or clasps. The "afiche" or chest-clasp was generally of a circular shape, and

ornamented at each end with a network of fine workmanship in precious metal set with pearl. The handkerchief, of some valuable material, hung at the waist with the keys.

At the end of the twelfth century, Mabilie de Retz, a noble and learned lady of Provence, wore a fur-bordered gown without a waist-band. The left side and left sleeve of the bodice are white, the other side blue. Parti-coloured garments were already in vogue.

At times women wore their sleeves *à la bombarde*, like the leg-of-mutton sleeves, of which I shall treat when writing of the Restoration. At other times they ornamented their gowns with gold round the throat; again, they preferred before everything a dress *à queue de serpent*. The Prior of Vigeois raised his voice against the long-tailed gowns. "The tail," said he, "gives a woman the look of a serpent."

The Council of Montpellier forbade the appendices in question under penalty of excommunication. Tunics made of fur were called "pelisses." The sleeves of "bliauds" were trimmed with puffs, braid, or embroidery. Beneath the "bliaud" drawers or the "bache" were worn.

One hundred years later women divided their hair in front, forming a parting that was called a "grève" (or shore). Many of them began to dress their hair without extraneous ornament, in all kinds of ways, and with no little skill. They wore a veil, as was rigorously enforced by the Church; for according to an Article of the Council of Salisbury, no priest might hear the confession of an unveiled woman. This veil covered the head so entirely that it was impossible to see whether a woman had any hair or not.

In the fourteenth century Frenchwomen left off the veil in favour of the "cornette," a sort of coif or hood. Their hats were called "couvre-chefs" (or head-coverings). The frame was of parchment, covered with fine cloth, silk, or velvet; it was fantastic enough, if I may make use of that modern expression.

But the couvre-chef did not remain long in fashion; it lasted

during a few years only, probably on account of its extraordinary appearance.

With regard to head-dresses women were about to fall, as we shall see, into strange and costly vagaries, and even to take pleasure in offending against the laws of modesty.

For a very long period Frenchwomen had assumed a costume almost similar to that of men, and consequently of a grave style. They had worn both the skirt or "*cotte hardie*" and the surcoat, with a pointed head-dress, from which hung a veil covering their shoulders and neck, something like the *guimpe* of a nun. To the surcoats were added enormous flowing sleeves, which softened the severity of their appearance, and made them more agreeable to the eye.

In the romance of "*Ermine de Reims*" the following passage occurs:—

"Two women approached me, wearing surcoats a yard longer than themselves, so that they must needs carry in their arms that which would have dragged on the ground; and they had also long cuffs on their surcoats, hanging from the elbows. . . ."

The greater number of the romance writers of the Middle Ages describe costumes of a similar nature. The surcoat, worn by both sexes alike in the reign of St. Louis, derived its name, in all probability, from the German word *cursat*, signifying a sort of gown. A garment worn over their cloaks by the Knights of the Star, an Order instituted by John the Good, was also called a surcoat.

The surcoat was passed over the shoulders. It was as wide behind as in front, and was hollowed out at the sides. It reached to below the hips, where it was attached to a very long skirt. Marguerite de Provence, the wife of St. Louis, wore a surcoat of ermine, and a gown, the lower edge embroidered with pearls and precious stones.

According to some bas-reliefs in ivory (twelfth century) the Queen of France wore a dress buttoned in front, with sleeves also buttoning from the elbow to the wrist; a mantle open at the sides so as to afford a passage for the arms, and a large collar

that left the throat and neck uncovered, ending in two points. The other figures wear gowns closed in front, and in some instances with double sleeves. The upper sleeve is wide at the edge and reaches only to the elbow.

At the same period both men and women wrapped themselves during the severe cold of winter in a cape or cope, a long mantle with a hood that could be drawn over the head in wet weather. The "*chape à pluie*," hood or cope, was probably gathered in front. How indispensable it must have been to ladies in travelling! It preserved them from cold and fog, and was as useful as the waterproof of the present day. An ancient writer speaks of a count and countess whose poverty was so great that they had but one "*chape*" between them. In the reign of Louis VII. only virtuous women had the right to wear these garments in the streets.

By retaining only the upper part of the *chape* or mantle, the hood came into existence, with its curtain or cape for the shoulders. To this was generally added a roll on the top, and a veil hanging down behind. The *chaperon* or hood was a sign of plebeian estate, and remained in fashion for several centuries.

The long-trained skirt of princesses and noble ladies, with turned back collar and narrow closed sleeves, was sometimes open down to the ground in front, and sometimes closed and trimmed with buttons, and covered with a mantle. The lower part of the face and throat were hidden by a "*guimpe*." Ladies frequently adopted the "*gauzape*" or sleeveless gown, which was emblazoned, long-trained, and bordered with ermine, thus distinguishing them from plebeians; for the most part they wore a handsome hood, or a coronet of pearls, and an *aumônière* or bag, remarkable either for its material or the needlework lavished upon it. This was generally speaking either a gift, or embroidered by the fair hands of the wearer. When the lady was travelling, her *aumônière* contained besides coin and jewels, a few simple medicaments, writing-tablets, etc. It was a small bag closed by a clasp or a running-string. It was destined to remain in fashion during all the Middle Ages, and afterwards to reappear as a passing caprice at various periods.

The costumes of Blanche of Castille, and of Marguerite of Provence, are interesting examples of the fashions of their day. Feminine dress first became splendid in the thirteenth century, when great ladies and wealthy bourgeois with their long tresses and with something in their carriage not unlike the Greek priestess, or the Roman matron, began to wear closely-fitting gowns, frequently ornamented with a belt of silk, or cloth of gold; the surcoat, and the fur-bordered mantle. A veil, fastened on the crown of the head, flowed over the shoulders. Occasionally the gown was open on the chest, and disclosed a sort of collar or chemisette artistically embroidered.

The ladies of highest birth then began to emblazon these closely-fitting gowns, fastened high at the throat. On the right side they placed their husband's coat of arms, on the left that of their own family. They cut open their sleeves in an extraordinary way, from elbow to wrist, whence hung a piece of the stuff.

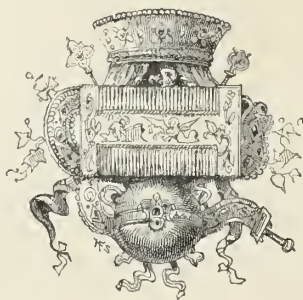
A gown was made "historical" by embroidering it with *fleurs-de-lis*, birds, fishes, and emblems of all sorts, and thus became a portable guide to genealogy.

Let us here remark that materials for garments had greatly increased in number. There was "cendal" almost the same as our silk at the present day, and "samite" which apparently greatly resembled cendal. The latter was made in every colour, both plain, and striped in two or three shades. Samite, a thick silk of six strands, was, for the most part, white, green, or red. Then there was "pers," or dark blue cloth; "camelin," a fabric made from camels' hair, of which "barracan" was only a variety. The warp of the barracan assumed the appearance of bars, whence many historians derive the name of the material itself. There was "isambrun" also, viz. cloth dyed brown; "molekin," a linen material; "brunette," a brown stuff; "bonnette," a green cloth, and "galebrun," a brown coloured cloth.

There was also a material still coarser than camelin called "bureau," there was "fustaine," a strong stuff manufactured from cotton, and finally "serge," woven of wool and occasionally mixed with thread.

The arts of weaving and dyeing had made extraordinary progress; a taste for handsome materials had spread even among the lowest ranks of society.

It would appear that the silk manufacturers of Rheims were not very scrupulous. They cheated their customers by introducing wool or thread into stuffs that they sold as pure silk; or they made use of silk badly dyed. At Rheims and many other places the saying, "He lies like a dyer," passed into a proverb.



CHAPTER V.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE CRUSADES.

1270 TO 1350.

Severity of feminine costume—Long gowns and *guimpes*—Marguerite of Provence—"Fermaux"—Reappearance of splendour in dress—Eastern customs—The priests of fashion—Haberdashery and peacock-feathers—Female embroiderers—Taste for embroidery—Continual temptations—Earliest sumptuary laws—Furs—St. Louis's opinion on dress—Prohibitions by Philippe le Bel ; speech made by his wife—Crépine.

OWING to the influence of the Crusades and the predilections of St. Louis, the dress of women assumed much of that severity proper to masculine garments. Under Louis VIII. a mantle had been the distinctive mark of a married woman. It is asserted that St. Louis's daughters, whose legs and feet were ill-shaped, contrived to wear very long gowns in order to hide them. This was surely a pardonable piece of coquetry, and long skirts became the order of the day. Similar causes have led to similar results in more recent times.

When once the long skirt had been introduced, it resisted many attempts to dislodge it. In the reign of Philip III. women hid their busts under a "guimpe," and looked almost like our sisters of Charity. The coat and the guimpe seem to have been introduced by Marie, the king's second wife, whose throat was too long, while her bust was absolutely flat, and the wives of the courtiers in this instance also copied the Queen of France. Imbued with the religious spirit that exercised at that time so great a power over the imaginations of mankind, or at any rate overmastered by it, the ladies of the court, with few exceptions, were modest in their attire. They added indeed to the elegance of their veils, but continued to wear them in obedience to ecclesiastical decrees. Queen Marguerite of Provence wore a dress close-fitting in the bodice,

the sleeves were long and narrow; her mantle was embroidered with *fleurs-de-lis*, and was made with long open sleeves. Her veil was folded with a band beneath the chin, but not setting closely to the face. Her head-dress was not unlike a turban.

But such humility as this could not long prevail over the malicious demon of coquetry. On the one hand, people of wealth indulged themselves in luxury and splendour, and many knights on returning from the Crusades, retained in France the habits they had acquired in the East, and on the other, the middle and lower classes tried to walk in the steps of the nobles, and the bourgeois endeavoured to array themselves like the haughty consorts of the Crusaders.

In consequence of the relations existing between France, Europe, and the East, and notwithstanding the deep religious convictions of the time, innumerable artisans and working women were employed in the service of Fashion; drapers or weavers, dress cutters and makers, trimmers, ribbon-makers, manufacturers of thread, or silk-fringers who made coifs; weavers of the coarse flaxen thread called "canevas," sellers of precious stones or jewellers, who exhausted their ingenuity in hundreds of new inventions; goldsmiths, whose art astonished the world; gold-beaters and silver-beaters, dyers, skilful in altering the colours of materials; moulders of buckles and delicate clasps; furriers who possessed the rarest and most costly furs; and makers of brass, copper, and wire buttons.

It was at the shops of haberdashers that the wives of the nobles bought the splendid "parures" with which they ornamented their heads. Gowns of siglaton and cendal (a material like modern silk) were ornamented with rubies and sapphires.

Head-dresses in Paris were sometimes surmounted with peacock's feathers; and these soon called into existence "paoniers" or peacock-hatters. One Geneviève had great custom as a feather-seller, and after having made a large fortune by her trade, she devoted it to the decoration of a chapel.

A very striking head-dress, though simpler than that of peacock's feathers, consisted of wreaths of natural flowers, prin-

cipally roses, and was prepared by the herbalists or floralists who abounded in several parts of the capital.

Epernon, the haberdasher of Rue Qui-qu'en-poist (Quincampoix), had certainly the largest choice of ornamental finery for feminine attire. His fame was in every one's mouth, and his shop always crowded with customers.

A large number of embroideresses obtained a living in Paris ; there were also many who made up purses with beautiful embroidery, or elegantly worked borders. These purses were fastened to the waist-band, and were called "aumônières sarraïnoises," or Saracen alms-bags. Their name recalled their benevolent object to the wearers, though they were used to hold other articles besides coin for the poor.

Within their castles noble ladies employed their long hours of leisure in needlework, imitating and sometimes excelling the work of the East. They embroidered veils, scarfs, armlets, belts, alms-bags, gloves, and shoes ; they copied the family coat-of-arms in silken, gold, or silver embroidery on their gowns, their surcoats, and their mantles.

The bourgeois also devoted their time to needlework, so as to increase the elegance of their dress, without infringing the regulations of the sumptuary laws.

Glove-makers made use of sheepskin, grey fur, hareskin, and doeskin in their factories. They also made woollen or silken gloves ; long buttoned gloves and scented gloves, and "gloves made of kid prepared with violet powder." Italy, Spain, and several French towns were famous for their skill and trade in gloves. But it was not enough to possess those articles ; it was also necessary to wear them according to the latest fashion, and on suitable occasions.

There were numerous makers of felt hats, flower head-dress makers of both sexes, makers of cotton, and of peacock-feathers, without counting the women weavers of silken head-coverings (a sort of milliner), women who made hats of orfrey, and silk-spinners. The principal towns of the kingdom abounded in hosiers, manufacturers of cloth, linen, or silk hose ; in tanners ; in clever

shoemakers, who well knew how to turn the point of a shoe *à la poulaine*—that is, extravagantly curved upwards and resembling the prow of a ship. Generally speaking the shoe *à la poulaine* distorted the foot very unpleasantly.

In the goldsmiths' shops women's eyes were dazzled by clasps, bracelets, necklaces, and other articles of marvellous workmanship; tailors exhibited goods that were in fact only too splendid. Some few mirror manufacturers kept open shops; their wares were exquisitely lovely. We may mention one mirror representing a betrothal, that may still be admired in a celebrated collection.

On every side there was constant temptation. Fortunes were swallowed up by the passion for dress, and poorer people made the most senseless sacrifices in the same cause. It was becoming impossible to determine the rank of a Frenchwoman by her garments.

In order to restore respect for the inequality of ranks, which inequality was a fixed principle actually corroborated by dress itself, and to prevent one woman from wearing garments exclusively reserved for another, sovereigns began to issue sumptuary laws.

Philip Augustus raised his voice against fur; though his court set no example of simplicity. "The gown and furred cloak of the Queen, at St. Rémy, cost twenty-eight pounds, less three sous."

It is interesting to learn what St. Louis, ninth of the name, thought about fashion and its rights. He said to his courtiers: "You should dress yourselves well and neatly, in order that your wives may love you the more, and your people also will esteem you the higher for it." Women of rank consequently dressed with great splendour. They frequently wore a long train fastened to their outer garment, and gilt belts enriched with jewels. They often wore two tunics, and a veil that was brought round under the chin. The fastenings of their mantles were of gold and jewels. They had rosaries of bone, ivory, coral, amber, or jet.

Luxury knew no bounds. The copes, or mantles without

hoods, made of silken cloth, and trimmed with ermine, embroidery, and edgings of gold were magnificent, and overloaded with ornament.

After the Crusade the ruling powers endeavoured to repress the prevailing extravagance. St. Louis issued several enactments previous to the prohibitions of Philippe le Bel respecting dress.

The wording of those prohibitions enlightens us considerably with regard to the manners and customs of those times. No bourgeoisie may possess a chariot. "No bourgeois and no bourgeoisie," says Philippe le Bel, "may wear minever, or grey fur, or ermine, and all such persons must get rid of those furs in their possession within a year from next Easter, and they may not wear gold, nor jewels, nor belts, nor pearls. . . . Dukes, counts, and barons, with six thousand livres a year or more, may have four pairs of gowns a year and no more, and their wives may have as many. . . . No damosel, unless she be châtelaine in her own right, or lady of two thousand livres a year or more, shall have more than one pair of gowns a year, or if she be, then two pairs only and no more. . . . No bourgeois nor bourgeoisie, nor esquire, nor clerk shall burn wax lights. . . ."

It was forbidden to barons' wives "howsoever great" to wear gowns of a higher value than twenty-five sous (of the Tours mint) by the Paris yard; the wives of knights-banneret and lords of the manor were restricted to materials at eighteen sous; and the gowns of bourgeois might cost sixteen sous nine deniers by the yard at the very most. The sumptuary law of Philippe le Bel proceeded probably from the following circumstance. On the occasion of his wife's solemn entry into Bruges in 1301, she had seen the bourgeois so gorgeously apparelled that she exclaimed, "I thought *I* was the Queen, but I see there are hundreds!"

From a document relating to the king's household in 1302, we learn that the complete costume of a lady of the palace cost eight livres, that of a woman of inferior rank one-third less, and that of a waiting-maid fifty-eight sous. The price of a Parisian bourgeoisie's cashmere shawl at the time of the Restoration would have renewed the whole wardrobe of a court lady.

According to another document of 1326, Isabelle de France wore a head-dress, sugar-loaf shape, of prodigious height; a veil of the finest gauze depended from it and concealed her hair.

Certain head-dresses of the period were ornamented with feathers, others were shaped like bushels of greater or less altitude. Occasionally the hair was confined in a net, called a "crestine, crépine," or "crespinette." The side-locks were shaped into horns. Sometimes, too, women dyed their hair, or wore false hair.

Guimpes were arranged something like collerettes; and were made lighter and lighter in material, so as to harmonize with every kind of costume.





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150 to 1600

HISTORY OF FASHION

1500 to 1600

1519

CHAPTER VI.

REIGNS OF JOHN AND OF CHARLES V.

1350 TO 1380.

The States of Languedoc—A young French lady in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—Low dresses—Saying of a mercer—*Damoiselles*—*Garnaches* and *garde-corps*—*Le Parement des dames*—Social distinctions—High character is worth more than gilded belt—Precious stones—The castles and other dwellings of the middle ages—Splendid furniture—Humble abodes of the poor—Evening assemblies.

NOTWITHSTANDING the efforts of legislation, extravagant expenditure on dress continued as great as ever, while the large majority of the French nation was suffering from great poverty. In 1356 the States of Languedoc forbade the use of rich clothes until the release of King John, who was a prisoner of war in England. But noble lords and ladies insulted the nation in its hour of misfortune by their prodigality, and defied the regulations that forbade them to wear gold, silver, or fur on their garments or open hoods, or any other sort of ornamentation.

As for widows, they found themselves unable to oppose the established custom. They therefore conformed to the regulation forbidding them to wear voilettes, crépines, and couvre-chefs. In like manner with nuns, they never appeared in public without a guimpe that entirely concealed the head, ears, chin, and throat. There seems, however, to have been no particular etiquette for the nobility as to mourning, before the reign of Charles V.

We may endeavour to sketch the portrait of a lady as she existed in feudal times, by means of the scanty materials in our possession, for we have no paintings, and very few sculptures of the time, only a few learned writers who supply us with valuable hints.

We know, however, that the gowns of the fourteenth century were of the same shape as those of the thirteenth; we also know that the Frenchwoman of the period began to discover the beauty of a small waist, and endeavoured to compress her own by means of lacing, and, finally, we know that, dating from the later years of the reign of Charles VI. a habit of uncovering the shoulders to an extent that at times became immodest was adopted.

Their "couvre-chefs" of silk were made by a special class of workwomen, called "makers of couvre-chefs." The couvre-chefs of Rheims were specially renowned.

There were no milliners in Paris either in the thirteenth or the fourteenth centuries. The haberdashers, of whom I have already spoken, sold articles of dress, scents, and elegant finery. In the "Dit d'un Mercier" we find the following lines:—

"J'ai les mignotes ceinturêtes,
J'ai beaux ganz à damoiselêtes,
J'ai ganz forrez, doubles et sangles,
J'ai de bonnes boucles à angles;
J'ai chaînêtes de fer bèles,
J'ai bonnes cordes à vièles;
J'ai les guimpes ensafranées,
J'ai aiguilles encharnelées,
J'ai escrins à mètre joiax,
J'ai borses de cuir à noiax,"¹ etc.

At mercers' shops, besides, ladies bought molekin, fine cambric, ruffs for the neck with gold buttons, the tressons or tressoirs that they were fond of twisting in their hair, and gold or pearl embroideries used for head-dresses, or for ornament generally, the silken or velvet gown being even bordered with them sometimes.

Lay figures, called "damoiselles," were used for fitting on ladies' dresses and other garments.

A young Frenchwoman in the fourteenth century wore her hair

¹ The mercer's list includes so many articles of which the names are obsolete, that it is not possible to translate it.

twisted round her head, with a black ribbon; a white dress embroidered in silver, bordered at the throat, shoulders, and elbows, and at the edge of the skirt with a fillet of gold. Small sleeves reaching from elbow to wrist were in red and white check, bordered with a double fillet of gold. Her shoes were black.

Sometimes her hair was confined by a white veil, mingled with pearl-embroidered ribbon; at other times she wore a coronet of beads, and her hair flowed loose over her shoulders. She frequently appeared in a short sleeveless tunic, called "corset fendu." Frequently, too, her hair was parted simply in two, and the long plaits arranged on the forehead. To this she would add a "fronteau," that is to say, either a tiara of beads or a circlet of gold. She made "atours" for herself, or pads stuffed in the shape of hearts, clubs, or horns.

A young girl of high birth wore the arms of her family; a married woman wore both her husband's and her own. Montfaucon, in his "*Antiquités de la Couronne de France*," gives us a drawing of an emblazoned gown belonging to a noble lady; and in an ancient Bible we find a picture of a woman on whose hair is a ribbon of gold tissue, and above it a small yellow cap with gold buttons. The upper dress is bordered on the bosom with ermine and gold bands, the skirt is of silver cloth, bearing a lion rampant and three red stars. The under garment, of a dull yellow, is confined by a gold band. The National Library contains the miniature of a French lady of the fifteenth century. She wears a head-dress of silken material, the white upper gown is bordered with fur, the under garment is yellow, and ornamented at the throat with gold embroidery. The shoes are black.

Long narrow white gowns without any ornament were worn by great ladies at home, when there was no occasion for ceremony; and they remained in fashion for a considerable length of time. There were also short sleeveless garments like the "*sarraux*," probably called "*garnaches*," and short ones with half sleeves called "*garde-corps*."

Peasant women wore blue gowns, beneath which was a woollen

petticoat bordered with velvet. Their hats were of straw, and a becoming white guimpe encircled the face.

Hoods or "aumusses" protected the head in bad weather. The chaperon or hood was much like a domino. It was made during the reign of Philippe le Bel in a peak, which fell on the nape of the neck, and was called a "cornette;" there was an opening or "visagière" for the face. As for the aumusse, made either of cloth or velvet, it resembled a pocket, and fell over on one side or other of the neck. On fine days ladies would carry their aumusse on their arm, as is done with a shawl or mantle.

In "Le Parement des Dames," by Oliver de la Marche, the poet and chronicler of the fifteenth century, he mentions slippers, shoes (of black leather probably), boots, hose, garters, chemises, cottés, stomachers, stay-laces, pinholders, aumônieres, portable knives, mirrors, coifs, combs, ribbons, and "templettes," so-called, because they encircled the temples and followed the edge of the coif with an undulating line. To these we must add the "gorgerette," gloves of chamois and of dogskin, and the hood, and we shall understand the "under" dress of a noble lady in the earlier half of the fifteenth century. With regard to the "outer" dress, we must remember that the material nearly always bore a large brocaded pattern. The paternoster or rosary put a finishing touch to the costume. These rosaries were either of coral or of gold, and were considered as ornaments taking the place of bracelets.

Notwithstanding legislative prohibitions and social distinctions, the desire of attracting attention led all women to dress alike. From this resulted a confusion of ranks absolutely incompatible with mediæval ideas.

St. Louis forbade certain women to wear mantles, or gowns with turned-down collars, or with trains, or gold belts. He wished that both in Paris and throughout his whole kingdom the distinction of class should be defined and obvious.

Afterwards, in 1420, the Parliament of Paris renewed the same prohibitions with no greater success. It is said that women of high character comforted themselves by saying: "*Bonne re-*

nommée vaut mieux que ceinture dorée."² This, whether true or not, has passed into a proverb.

A great number of jewellers existed in Paris in the fourteenth century. Yet real pearls were little known. The Government thought they had provided against every danger by forbidding the sale of coloured glass in the place of real stones. Trade with the Levant initiated us into the science of precious stones, and at first they were regarded with general reverence, supernatural virtues being attributed to them. People imagined that rubies, sapphires, and sardonyx produced certain marvellous effects.

The second period of the Middle Ages was full of artistic instincts, and beautiful castles and dwellings rose up on every side. Meanwhile, home life had become more refined in some classes of the population.

Every man who had acquired wealth, or even a modest competence only, built himself a residence according to his taste, and frequently displayed magnificence far beyond his means. Dressers, cupboards, carved chests, ivory, bronze, enamelled copper, miniature statues, reliquaries, and a quantity of other articles, hitherto unknown, were to be seen in palaces and wealthy houses, and even in humbler abodes.

But among the poor there was no such change. Their homes had remained the same for many centuries, their cottages and little enclosures of land were unaltered. These contained the barest necessities only. Yet a marked improvement was apparent in furniture and cooking-utensils.

With greater comfort in their homes and with better furniture than in the past, both Frenchmen and Frenchwomen were making an onward progress in their mode of life and their social relations. In the towns as well as in the depth of the country, people met together of an evening to listen to a band of skilful minstrels—a sort of concert. On the eves of feasts the women sat together at their embroidery or the spinning-wheel. Long legends were narrated, to the delight of family circles, and children were made

² "Fair fame is better than golden belt."

happy by little picture-books drawn expressly for their amusement, while maidens and youths would draw sweet music from their lyres.

These assemblies naturally developed a taste for dress. The poet Eustache Deschamps speaks of the splendour of women's dress, of their gold and silver chains and belts, and of the little bells with which they adorned their garments.





top picture from...

Charles V & Louis XI
1480 to 1500

HISTORY OF FASHION

CHAPTER VI
The 15th Century

CHAPTER VII.

REIGNS OF CHARLES VI. AND CHARLES VII.

1380 TO 1461.

Taste in dress becomes purer—Heart-shaped head-coverings, the “cornette,” and the “hennin” in the reign of Charles VI.—Husbands complain—Preachers denounce—Thomas Connecte declaims against the diabolic invention—Brother Richard tries to reform it—The “hennin” gains the victory—Costume of Jeanne de Bourbon—“Escoffion”—An absurd figure—Gravouère—Isabeau de Bavière—Gorgiasetés—Tripes—Splendour of the court—Agnes Sorel—“Coiffe adournée;” diamonds; the carcan—Walking-sticks.

It is a curious fact, of more frequent occurrence than might be imagined, but the terrible Hundred Years' War, which cost so much French and English blood, in nowise diminished women's passion for dress and fashion, whims and extravagance of all kinds.

It must even be acknowledged that this melancholy period of our history was remarkable for the splendour of its fashions.

From the time of the Capets there had been much variation in dress and in luxury. The taste of the nation was stimulated and improved by foreign importations. Emblazoned garments had become a thing of the past.

In the reigns of Charles V. and Charles VI. especially caprice began to play an important part in the dress of women. The “beguins,” or hoods, were changed at first into high heart-shaped head-gear, with two wide wings fastened to the head with wire and bearing a strong resemblance to the sails of a windmill. Next, the heart-shapes having been criticized by the clergy were transformed into “hennins,” the *nec plus ultra* of fashion, and were of a most prodigious height.

Very different from the masculine head-gear bearing the same name was the “cornette” or “hennin” worn by women. This

was a kind of two-horned head-dress, with horns about a yard high, which was introduced into France by Isabeau de Bavière, the wife of Charles VI. The "hennins" were made of lawn stiffly starched and kept in shape by fine wire, but were of less exaggerated size.

Such a novelty was irresistible; all the ladies eagerly copied the Queen, and vied with each other as to who should wear the most handsome head-gear, "peaked like a steeple," says Paradin, and the tallest horns. From these horns there hung like flags, crape, fringe, and other materials, falling over the shoulders. Such head-dresses were naturally very expensive, and husbands were loud in complaint. Matrons and maidens alike "went to great excesses, and wore horns marvellously high and large, having great wings on either side, of such width, that when they would enter a door it was impossible for them to pass through it." The height of the hennins was so great that a small woman looked at a distance like a moving pillar.

In mourning, however, the cornette was rolled round the throat and thrown backwards.

"Never, perhaps," observes Viollet-le-Duc, "did extravagance in head-gear reach such a pitch with the fair sex as during those melancholy years from 1400 to 1450; the hair itself formed but a small part of the head-dress; hoods, couvre-chefs, chapels, horns, cornettes, hennins, twists, knots, frémillels, and chains were built up into the most extraordinary edifices."

Yet it was far worse than all this in England, where eccentricity and caprice reached a height never attained at the French court.

Confessors in France, and monks especially, added their animadversions to those of grumbling husbands. They considered the "hennin" as an invention of the Evil One, and a deadly warfare against the obnoxious article was soon organized.

In 1428 a Breton monk, named Thomas Connecte, preached throughout Flanders, Artois, Picardy, and the neighbouring provinces. He travelled from town to town, riding on a small

mule and followed by a crowd of disciples on foot. On reaching his destination he said mass on a platform expressly prepared for him, then he preached against non-juring priests, the "hennins" of great ladies, and also against gamblers, calling upon the latter to burn their draught-boards and chess-boards, cards, ninepins, and dice. He called on children to help him, frequently shouting out the first, by way of example, "*au hennin !*" whenever he caught sight of any woman wearing a high head-dress in the streets; and if she failed to find a speedy refuge in some house she was soon covered with mud, dragged in the gutter, and sometimes severely wounded.

Connecte was looked upon by the people as an admirable reformer, but he failed to reform the head-gear of women; victory remained with the hennin.

Another monk, a Franciscan, one Brother Richard, followed in the steps of Connecte the Carmelite. On the 16th April, 1429, he began a course of sermons at the Abbey Church or St. Geneviève, which lasted till April 26th. He ascended the pulpit at five in the morning, and remained there until ten or eleven o'clock. He, too, endeavoured to reform the dress of women and their towering head-gear. His discourses occasioned some disturbances. After the tenth sermon Brother Richard received his dismissal from the Governor of Paris.

It could not be said that the holy men preached in the desert, for wheresoever they lifted up their voices there were large audiences, and for a time the obnoxious hennins disappeared; but only for a time. "The ladies," wrote Guillaume Paradin, the historian, "imitate the snails who draw in their horns, and when the danger is over put them out farther than ever; and in like manner hennins were never more extravagant than after the departure of Brother Thomas Connecte."

Finally, whether their husbands spoke on behalf of economy, or their priests appealed to the decrees of the Church, victory remained with the women. They only gave up the hennins from a caprice similar to that which had invented them.

No one will expect to find Frenchwomen more constant or

more economical in dress than their husbands. In the reign of Charles V., beauty had already asserted its claims, and coquetry filled the heart of women who sought for admiration. They gave up the fashions of the Middle Ages, and uncovered their bosoms; in addition to hennins they wore padded head-dresses with horns, or pieces of stuff cut out and laid one upon the other like the petals of a flower.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, scalloped sleeves were attached to the corsets, or rather to the bodices, which were separated from the skirt behind, ending in a horizontal fold on the hips, while in front they were ungirdled, and reached down to the feet. These bodices were cut very low in the neck: the shoulders were slightly covered by a hood.

Jeanne de Bourbon, the wife of Charles V., wore "royal robes wide and flowing, *en sambues pontificales*, that they call 'chapes' or copes, that is, mantles of gold or silk covered with jewels." The wives of barons wore earrings, "outrageous toes to their shoes, and they seemed to be sewn up in their too scanty garments."

The expression "too scanty" was probably applied to the mantilla introduced by Queen Jeanne, and which was called a "corset." The mantilla reached to the waist both in front and behind; in winter it was made of fur, and in summer of cloth or of silk; it had a sort of busk covered with gold braid, and matched in colour the borders of the surcoat, thus relieving the monotony of the lines as well as the sameness of colouring.

Those ladies who wore trains to the skirts of their surcoats, used to tuck them up for walking. The surcoat, in fact, was very similar to a gown, and its dimensions soon became so enormous, that, as we learn from Christine de Pisan, a man-milliner of Paris made a "cotte hardie" for a lady in Gâtinais, in which were five yards, long measure, of Brussels cloth. The train lay three-quarters of a yard on the ground, and the sleeves fell to the feet. This, no doubt, was an expensive costume. There were women whose surcoats were longer than themselves by a full yard. They were obliged "to carry the trains thereof over their arms, and

there were long cuffs to their surcoats hanging to the elbows, and their busts were raised high up."

The fashions of head-dresses changed from bare heads to crêpines, and coifs with tow underneath, and stuffed "à l'escoffion," a sort of padded beretta. The name "escoffion" became afterwards popularly used for the head-dress of the women of the lower orders, or the peasant-women, or that of women with their hair badly done. The fishwomen, when quarrelling, had a trick of tearing off each other's escoffions.

At the same period, the most absurd adjuncts to dress were daily invented, causing that charming poet, Eustache Deschamps, to exclaim,—

"Atournez-vous, mesdames, autrement,
Sans emprunter tant de barribouras,"¹ &c.

In the reign of Charles VI., the houppelande was the fundamental article of women's attire, but passing from one extravagance to another, they at last adopted the strange fashion of giving an abnormal development to the front of the figure! This continued in fashion for forty years.

In the Charvet Collection there is an earring of the fifteenth century, ornamented with a polyedrus in incrustated purple glass. We still possess framed rings (*bagues chevalières*) and other ornaments of that period, and, in particular, one silver-gilt medal in the shape of a heart; on the reverse the Virgin and St. Catherine are represented in mother-of-pearl. Enamelled gems were much in vogue among the nobility during the reign of Charles VI. There were also enamels of flowers, insects, domestic animals, and small ornamented human figures, initials, and mottoes.

A little instrument was invented for parting the hair. It was a sort of stiletto or bodkin called a "gravouère," generally made of ivory or crystal, and sometimes mounted in gold. It remained in use as an article of the toilet during the whole of the Middle Ages.

The custom of wearing bracelets and necklaces dates so far back

¹ "Attire yourselves, mesdames, I pray, otherwise than in all those falbalas," &c.

as the reign of Charles VI., when Isabeau de Bavière introduced the fashion of trinkets. They were called “gorgiasetés” in the language of the day, and it used to be said of persons whose dress exceeded the limits of decorum, that they dressed “gorgiasement.” Isabeau also patronized very long trained gowns, and mantles with trains, carried by ladies’-maids or pages.

This custom still prevails at court; likewise liveries of certain colours to distinguish all the household of great nobles. Liveries, which had already existed for several centuries, became much more prevalent in the reign of Charles VI.

The “cotte hardie” was long and flowing, but was confined at the waist, partially revealing the outline of the figure. It was lined with rich fur. As the surcoat concealed the cotte everywhere except at the sleeves, the latter were tucked up very high by the wearers so as to display the valuable material of the “cotte hardie.” They also made an opening in the surcoat in order to show the girdle. Sermons were vainly preached against the latter fashion.

Isabeau de Bavière, the sovereign arbiter of dress, had fanciful tastes which became law to other ladies, both in the matter of head-gear and of toilet generally.

There appeared successively the “tripe,” a sort of light jockey cap made of knitted silk; the “atour,” stuffed with tow; and, lastly, head-dresses of such towering height that the ceilings in the Castle of Vincennes, then a royal abode, were raised to enable the ladies to move about in comfort and safety.

It was of course absolutely necessary to be beautiful, to attract admiration, to dazzle the crowd, to make use of every device to prove that universal homage was both deserved and obtained. To this end therefore the French ladies heaped ornament upon ornament. Beautiful prayer-books were in general use, and indeed formed an integral portion of fashionable attire:—

“Heures me fault de Nostre-Dame,
Si comme il appartient à fame (femme)
Venue de noble paraige,
Qui soient de subtil (subtil) ouvraige,

D'or et d'azur, riches et cointes,
 Bien ordonnées et bien pointes,
 De fin drap d'or très bien couvertes ;
 Et quand elles seront ouvertes,
 Deux fermaux d'or qui fermeront,"² &c.

These prayer-books were carried in cases suspended to the arm or waist.

Until the reign of Charles VI. the under-garments of French-women were of coarse stuff or serge, that is, of woollen material.

Isabeau de Bavière was the first to wear a linen chemise ; she possessed, however, two only. The fine ladies of the fifteenth century naturally imitated her, and in order to show that they wore linen under-garments, they made openings in their gown sleeves that the chemise might be seen ; they even opened their skirts on the hips in order to display the length of the chemise ; and they ended by having those garments made of fine linen only in the parts visible to the public, the rest was in coarse stuff or serge. Linen chemises were regarded as luxuries until the time of Louis XI. They were called "robes-linges."

In the reign of Charles VI., the dress of servant-maids was generally composed of three pieces ; a bodice of one colour, a tucked up skirt of another, and a petticoat with a kilted flounce at the edge, such as are worn at the present time. The hair was covered with a kind of cap "à la musulmane."

Such is the costume we find represented in the miniatures of the latter period of the fourteenth century.

Every one knows what evil times had befallen our country under Charles VI. The English were masters of a great part of France, at the time that Charles VII. ascended the throne and was called in mockery "King of Bourges." That affront was wiped out by Joan of Arc. At that period, Fashion was confined for a

² "My book of hours, those of Notre-Dame, I must have,
 And it shall be such as beseemeth noble dame of high lineage.
 Of subtle workmanship, gold and azure, rich and rare ;
 Well ordered and well shapen ;
 Covered in fine cloth, or in wrought gold,
 And when it is opened, to be closed again
 With two golden clasps," &c.

long time within narrow limits; but no sooner had France returned to her normal state, than the court of Charles VII. displayed a magnificence of which the sovereign set the example on the occasion of his entry into Rouen. He rode a palfrey caparisoned in blue velvet, embroidered with gold lilies, and the "chanfrein," or nose-piece, was of plates of solid gold with ostrich plumes.

The beautiful Agnes Sorel was as much devoted to splendour as Isabeau de Bavière. Certain changes began to take place in women's dress. We meet with trailing gowns, high head-dresses in great variety, splendid stuffs, lace, gloves, mittens, rings, and necklaces, towards the middle of the fifteenth century; and with sundry additions of a still more extravagant nature; with conical hats of which our Cauchoises have retained the shape, and the "coiffe adournée," a cylinder or tube diminishing in size towards the top, where it either terminated in a flat crown, or curved over towards the back and hung down like a veil.

Agnes Sorel, famous both for wit and beauty, acted as it were the part of a queen. All women were led by her in the matter of dress, and this brilliant creature, surnamed the "Lady of Beauty," began to adorn herself in the most magnificent costumes. If we may believe a chronicler of those times, her "train was a third longer than that of any princess in the kingdom, her head-gear higher, her gowns more numerous and costly," and her bosom bare to the waist.

She is thus represented by a painter of the time, whose portrait of her may be seen in the Historical Gallery of Versailles. The fashions introduced by the "Lady of Beauty," were indecorous in other respects besides that of uncovering the shoulders. Display became excessive under her auspices; she was the first to wear diamonds in the hair, and it is said also that she first endeavoured to get them cut with facets. Her heavy and splendid diamond necklace she called "my carcan."³

³ The iron collar by which criminals were bound to the gibbet was called a "carcan."—*Translator's note.*

Isabelle de Portugal wore a necklace from which hung a locket. The necklace was of pearls strung on gold thread.

In the fifteenth century the scarlet coat of a duke or baron cost twenty livres the ell (about 400 francs of our coinage). Two ells and a half were necessary for a very sumptuous coat, which therefore cost 1000 francs; it lasted however for several years. Cloth of gold cost ninety livres the ell (1800 francs).

This gives us some idea of the cost of clothes in general.

Women's gowns required a greater quantity of material, because of their greater length. A lady who had neither page nor hand-maiden to carry her train, was obliged to fold it across her arm. Certain dresses, "*à quinze tuyaux*" (or fifteen-fluted), fell in stiff tubes round the skirt, like the pipes of an organ. On horseback women wore shorter gowns, called "*robes courtes à chevaucher*."

Many women of rank carried at that period light walking-sticks of valuable wood, with handles ornamented with the image of a bird. In place of mittens they wore violet-scented gloves, which were, according to Olivier de la Marche, imported from Spain. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, kid and silk gloves were in fashion, with gold and silver embroidery on the back. It was indecorous to give one's hand gloved to any one, or to wear gloves for dancing. In France at the present time the contrary is our custom.

Women made use of fans at church to disperse the flies. Their fans were ordinarily made of feathers, peacocks' feathers in particular.

The Queen of France astonished the Parisians by driving about among them in a swinging chariot of great splendour, that she had received as a present from the King of Hungary. For a long time she was the only woman in France who possessed such a vehicle.

The court was beginning to decree official costumes of ceremony. Fashion had now founded her absolute rule.

During the whole of the Middle Ages fair hair alone was considered beautiful. On this point the French and the ancient

Greeks were of one mind. Homer has described the fair hair of Aphrodite, Hera, and Pallas Athene; in like manner our ancient poets describe their heroines as blonde beauties, and they invented the word "blondoyer," to become, or to grow fair-haired. This fashion must have led to the manufacture of enormous quantities of false hair.





E LIX

Charles VIII
1483 to 1498

HISTORY OF FASHION

Louis XII
1498 to 1515

CHAPTER VIII.

REIGNS OF LOUIS XI., CHARLES VIII., AND LOUIS XII.

1461 TO 1515.

Duchesses and bourgeois under Louis XI.—“La grand'gorre,” or sumptuosity—The “trousse” —Allegorical and moral costumes —Trains — Head-dresses—“Collets rebrassés”—Wigs and false hair—Some results of the war in Italy—Italian fashions—“Sollerets” and slippers—Gorgetts—Garters—Jean Marot writes against novelties—Anne of Brittany—Pins—Menot “the golden-tongued”—A Parisian in the time of Louis XII.—Coat à l’Italienne—Manufacture of stuffs.

THE Empire of Fashion was scarcely founded, ere it began to promulgate those despotic laws which have never been relaxed to the present day.

The spread of luxury, art, and comfort, which became manifest at the dawn of the Renaissance, led to a sudden change in the whole character of costume. This fact has been commented on by all historians; and can be verified and explained by the archives of the period.

Although for the most part Louis XI. affected a great simplicity in his dress, and was fond of playing the “bourgeois,” yet at times he desired to see his palace filled with nobles richly attired, and wearing magnificent stuffs, even of foreign manufacture. The astute sovereign appreciated the influence of fashion on commercial prosperity.

Then commenced a competition in dress between the bourgeoisie of the towns and the nobility; as says the poet,—

“ En Paris, y en a beaucoup
Qui n’ont d’argent, vergier, ne terre,
Que vous jugeriez chacun coup
Alliés aux grands chefs de guerre.
Ils se disent issus d’Angleterre,
D’un comte, d’un baron d’Anjou,

Parents aux sénéchaux d'Auxerre,
 Ou aux châtelains du Poitou,
 Combien qu'ils soient saillis d'un trou,
 De la cliquette d'un meunier,
 Voire ou de la lignée d'un chou,
 Enfants à quelque jardinier . . .
 Une simple huissière, ou clergesse
 Aujourd'hui se présumera
 Autant et plus qu'une duchesse ;
 Heureux est qui en finira !
 Une simple bourgeoise aura
 Rubis, diamans et joyaux,
 Et Dieu sait si elle parlera
 Gravement en termes nouveaux ! ”¹ . . .

Maillard, a preacher of the day, declaimed against “gorgeous” women (“femmes à la grand'gorre”), rebuking them for their long trains, their furs, and gold ornaments. He sketched the portrait of a lawyer's wife dressed like a princess. Other preachers drew comparisons between the poverty of the people and the self-indulgence of fine ladies. “The poor,” says one of them, “are dying of cold ; while you, Madame Pompous, Madame Boastful (“la braguarde”), you have seven or eight gowns in your coffer that you do not put on thrice in the year.”

So long as the bourgeois dressed above their station, it was naturally next to impossible that the female aristocracy should not endeavour to eclipse their humbler rivals. “The married ladies, and the young ladies at the court of Louis XI., no longer wore trains to their gowns, but they wore borderings of fur and of velvet, and of other materials the same width as velvet ; on their heads they wore round padded caps, with peaks half a yard in height—some more, some less—and fastened above these were

¹ “There may be seen in Paris many who possess neither money, house, nor land, but whom you would take, at a glance, to be allied to the greatest chiefs and warriors. They say that they come from England, and are the issue of a count, or a baron of Anjou, and related to the seneschals of Auxerre, or the lords of manors in Poitou. And for the most part they come from holes and corners, out of the loft of a miller, perhaps, or of the lineage of a cabbage, children of a gardener. The wife of a mere clerk, or a doorkeeper, presumes nowadays as much as a duchess. It would be well there should be an end of this ! You shall see a simple bourgeoisie decked out with diamonds and jewels, and talking gravely, in good sooth, in all the new phrases.”

long veils reaching to the ground behind, with silken girdles four or five inches wide, with both the metal work and the tissue wide and gilt, and weighing six or seven silvern ounces; and on their necks broad collars of gold of diverse workmanship."

One side of their long skirts was held up by a "trousseire" or clasp. The trousseire consisted of a chain, of more or less value, which was attached to the girdle and to which a small scent-box, some keys, and a strong clasp for holding up the gown, besides other little articles, were suspended.

Olivier de la Marche in his poem of "*Le Triomphe des dames*" (1464), recommended fine ladies to wear costumes of allegorical and moral significance, viz., slippers of humility, shoes of diligence, stockings of perseverance, garters of firm purpose, a cotte of chastity, a waistband of magnanimity, a pincushion of patience, a purse of liberality, a knife of justice, a ring of faith, a comb of stings, a hood of hope, &c.

He spoke in jest; but Jean Juvénal des Ursins was in serious earnest, when in 1467 he told the States-General, "Another wound of the State lies in coats of silk; and as to women, God knows how they are attired, in gowns of the said material, cottes, and in many and divers ways. In bygone days we have seen how damosels and other women, by merely turning up the edge of their dresses in a fashion called "profit," looked like handsome white cats; nowadays they make these "profits" of silk material as wide as cloth, with great horns or high towers on their heads, or couvre-chefs of stuff or silk reaching to the ground. . . ."

Dresses were now profusely trimmed with ribbons and cords; and the mode of the silk corset separate from the skirt was adopted; the gown was of Florence satin, open up the front, and in winter lined with badger's fur. By these means noble ladies marked the distinction between themselves and mere bourgeois. A thin wooden busk in the front of the corset was called a "coche." Occasionally the chemise, artistically arranged, took the place of the corset, properly so-called, which had itself succeeded to the "bliaud."

Towards 1480, women uncovered the neck very much in full dress,

and "collets" or collars were worn turned downwards almost to the arms. These were called "rebrassés," and were often trimmed with fur. Villon mentions them in his "Grand Testament :"—

" Dames à rebrassez collets,
De quelconque condicion " ² . . .

Working women going into the towns to sell their merchandise or their work, wore a white apron and a gown of cloth, serge, or woollen; they were bareheaded, the hair being confined by a band on the forehead and hanging loosely behind. They imitated the bourgeois in the make of their dresses, but refrained from trains.

The fashion of hanging sleeves was succeeded by that of tight, close-fitting ones. Gowns were made with bodices laced up in front like the Swiss costume; and the collars, sleeves, and edge of the skirt were bordered with a wide band of velvet; the sleeves hung down to the ground. A girdle of velvet covered with gold-work fitted tightly to the waist. Another girdle called a "surceinte" embroidered with mottoes, initials, and even with heraldic arms, confined the outer garment.

There were three kinds of head-gear, the pyramid, the truncated, terminated by a button, and the small "barillet," which was like a little barrel. Hats were more general under Charles VI. and Charles VII., and were worn at all times.

Long hair, whether natural or false, was called a wig. Poets raised their voices against the false hair, which was worn over the forehead till it touched the eyes; the ears were hidden by it, and the ends, reaching to the shoulders, were curled. The hair was either white, or of the bright yellow colour fashionable at the present day. An infusion of onion-skin was sometimes used as a dye.

In the reign of Louis XI., French ladies "adorned" themselves with enormous head-dresses, three quarters of a yard in height, stuffed into various shapes, viz., a heart reversed, a shell, or a cushion, and covered with beads and precious stones. Doorways

² "Ladies with turned-down collars,
Of whatever condition."

were widened that ladies might pass through them. Montesquieu, writing on the subject, says that "architects have often been obliged to contravene the rules of their art as to the dimensions of entrances to our apartments, in order to bring them into proportion with women's adornments."

The fashion of long hair and also of false hair lasted until the close of the reign of Louis XII.

The admirable miniatures on the manuscripts of the fifteenth century certainly point to an improvement in head-dressing, as well as in attire generally. We learn from them that the sugar-loaf head-dress was in fashion during the whole of that century. It was ordinarily bordered in front with gold embroidery on black velvet. That portion of the dress which covered the chest was of black velvet, embroidered in the upper part, and of gold tissue as far as the waist. The outer dress was of blue velvet, embroidered in gold, and lined and bordered with crimson velvet. The edge of the sleeves was of the same. The veil was white and transparent, the belt green, and sparkling with gold ornaments. That part of the under-dress which was visible below was violet; the shoes were black.

Generally speaking, the train of a great lady was borne by a young girl. The head-dress of the latter was black or brown velvet.

Our fair readers will remember that Charles VIII., son of Louis XI., made a warlike expedition into Italy, where the "French fury" was lavishly displayed. They are familiar, no doubt, with accounts of the entry of Charles VIII. into Florence, Rome, Capua, and Naples successively. "The discovery of Italy," an historian very justly remarks, "had turned the heads of the French; they were not strong enough to withstand its charm. We use the right expression when we say 'discovery.' The companions of Charles VIII. were not less astounded than were those of Christopher Columbus."

The Italians, on the other hand, greatly admired the agreeable manners of the French. As Charles VIII. made his progress through their country, they assumed the French mode of dress, and sent for all manner of finery from France. Victors and

vanquished made mutual exchange of manufactured productions. The French, who still wore the striking costumes of the days of chivalry, excited eager curiosity wheresoever they went, and the greater the contrast between their garments and those of the Italians, the more did the latter delight in wearing the French fashions. They willingly exchanged their Genoese trinkets and jewels against the products of the Arras looms, if only from mere love of novelty.

When the King of France had once more crossed the Alps and returned to his capital, the French ladies in their turn experienced the fascination that the soldiers of Charles VIII. had succumbed to in Italy. Their "heads were" likewise "turned," and their enthusiasm naturally had its effect on the fashions of the day.

Our fair countrywomen laid aside the sombre garments of the time of Louis XI., and began to wear the brightest colours, as well as several materials of Milanese or Venetian manufacture. Many Italian fashions were added to our national costume—viz. tight-fitting bodices, highly ornamented; very wide sleeves; white gowns trimmed with many-coloured fringes; and black veils. The ladies would no longer wear the hennin, which had been so fashionable in the reign of Charles VI., and declared it was horrible.

For poulaines "sollerets" were substituted; these were rounded to the shape of the feet. Very light slippers were made in velvet or satin, of the same shape as sollerets; and shoes, something like high pattens, that were worn over the slippers. "Nos mignonnes," says the poet Guillaume Coquillart, in "Les Droits Nouveaux,"—

" Nos mignonnes sont si trèshaultes,
Que, pour paraître grandes et belles,
Elles portent pantoufles haultes
Bien à vingt et quatre semelles." ³

Hose, or stockings, were composed of several pieces of stuff sewed together. Chemises of woollen stuff were in general use. The "gorgerette" or gorget, a linen collar, either plain or plaited,

³ " Our fair ones are so grand,
That to appear tall and fair,
They must have high slippers
Even with four-and-twenty soles."

reached as high up as the collar-bones, and was worn over the "piece" or "plastron" of stuff that was laced across the chest. The "demi-ceint" was a small silken scarf, wound about the waist and fastened in front by a rosette. The "ceinture" was a wide ribbon, worn flat over the hips and ending in an angle on the skirt, where it formed a rosette with two floating ends.

Among the accessories of dress were garters, either fastened by a buckle or simply tied. These were ornamented, in the fifteenth century, with mottoes or initials. Women also made use of pincushions, of purses in the shape of bags, of knives, of "rings" —meaning probably necklaces, and of paternosters or rosaries of gold, pearls, or other valuable materials. These were fastened to the knot of the girdle, and hung down in front of the gown. We have already mentioned these rosaries.

In the reign of Louis XII., the successor of Charles VIII., the dress of women was but slightly changed. The upper gowns were made shorter, reaching only to the knees, and resembled a wide cloak or cape, cut low on the bosom.

One great novelty was the shape of the sleeves, which in the upper gown remained wide and flowing, but those belonging to the under bodice consisted of several separate pieces fastened together by ribbons. We can picture, to ourselves the elegant appearance of a sky-blue bodice, of a dark blue cloth gown, and of green sleeves in superfine cloth. Some women dressed in Genoese, or Milanese, or Greek fashion. The poet Jean Marot is unsparing in his criticisms on such women :—

"De s'accoustrer ainsi qu'une Lucrèce,
A la lombarde ou la façon de Grèce,
Il m'est avis qu'il ne se peut faire
Honnestement.

"Garde-toi bien d'estre l'inventeresse
D'habitz nouveaux ; car mainte pécheresse
Tantôt sur toy prendrait son exemplaire.
Si à Dieu veux et au monde complaire,
Porte l'habit qui dénote simplesse
Honnestement."⁴

⁴ "To accoutre oneself like a Lucretia,
A Lombard woman, or in Grecian fashion,

A considerable number of wealthy ladies began to frequent the court, attracted thither by the fascinating manners of Anne of Brittany, "the good queen," whose whims became a law, according to which all Frenchwomen regulated their dress, whatever might be their position in the social scale.

It is worthy of remark that, at the close of the Middle Ages and during the first years of the Renaissance, brides wore red or scarlet on their wedding-day.

Anne of Brittany was celebrated for the beauty of her leg and foot, and liked to wear her skirts short. Most women followed her example in that respect.

For a long time past ladies had made use of pins, gilt pins even; they now began to outstrip the bounds of moderation in their use. "Oh, ladies!" exclaimed Michel Menot, the Franciscan monk, surnamed the Golden Tongue, "Oh, ladies! who are so dainty, who so often miss hearing the Word of God, though you have only to step across the gutter to enter the church, I am certain it would take less time to clean out a stable for forty-four horses than to wait until all your pins are fastened in their places. . . . When you are at your toilet you are like a cobbler, whose business is to 'stop up,' and to 'rub,' and to 'put to rights,' and who needs a thousand different articles for bits and patches." He added: "A shoemaker's wife wears a tunic like a duchess."

Vainly did the preacher thunder against pins. Fashion could not be in the wrong. Presumptuous were they who attacked her, for her partisans increased with the number of her opponents.

We must now point out a change in the mode of wearing mourning.

The former queens of France had worn white for mourning. On the death of Charles VIII., Anne of Brittany for the first

It is my belief cannot be done
With honesty.

"Beware of being the inventress
Of new attire, for many a sinner
Might make thee her exemplar.
If thou would please God and the world,
Wear the dress that denotes simplicity
In honesty."

time wore black. She wore a white silk cord round her waist, and had a similar cord affixed to her coat-of-arms, knotted in four places and twisted into four loops, forming the figure of 8,⁵ so as publicly to display her grief for the loss of so beloved a husband.

Clément Marot, the son of Jean Marot, has given us the following sketch of a fashionable Parisian lady in the time of Louis XII. :—

“O mon Dieu ! qu'elle estoit contente
De sa personne ce jour-là ;
Avecques la grâce qu'elle a,
Elle vous avoit un corset
D'un fin bleu, lacé d'un lacet
Jaune, qu'elle avoit faict exprès.
Elle vous avoit puis après
Mancherons d'escarlate verte,
Robe de pers, large et ouverte.
.
Chausses noires, petits patins,
Linge blanc, ceinture houppee,
Le chaperon faict en poupée. . . .”⁶

Some commentary is needed on the above description to enable the reader to form an accurate idea of a fine lady in Marot's time.

The “corset d'un fin bleu” must be rendered by “a bodice of the finest sky-blue.” Instead of “mancherons d'escarlate,” we must read, “brassards or sleeves of the finest possible quality,” because the word “écarlate,” or scarlet, was used in those days to denote quality, not colour, as at present. The “chaperon faict en poupée” was a piece of stuff placed on the head-dress.

⁵ A cord twisted so as to form a figure of ∞ was called a *lac d'amour*, or love-knot.—*Translator's note.*

⁶ “Heavens ! how satisfied she was
With her good looks that day !
With all her dainty graces !
Look you, she had a bodice
Of the finest sky-blue, laced
With a lace of yellow, made for her.
And then she had sleeves of green
Of rich stuff, and a gown
Both wide and open.
.
Black hosen, little slippers,
White linen, a looped girdle,
And a fair kerchief on her head-dress.”

Sometimes, as we see by a manuscript in the National Library, French ladies would dress after the Italian fashion, that is, with a greater quantity of jewels, and without head-gear; their hair being curled at the side, and plaits wound round the head.

Although extravagance in dress had not yet reached the point which it afterwards attained under the chivalrous Francis I., yet it began to be universally displayed in both masculine and feminine attire.

At the privileged fairs, quantities of materials of more or less value were offered for sale. Bourges was so famous for its cloth, that wealthy purchasers frequently stipulated that their coats should be made in "fine Bourges cloth." Foreign manufactures of gold, silver, and silk entered France by way of Susa, when coming from Italy; Spanish goods were sent by way of Narbonne and Bayonne, whence they were forwarded direct to Lyons, where they were unpacked and sold. The Paris ell was longer by one-half than that of Flanders, Holland, England, and other countries.

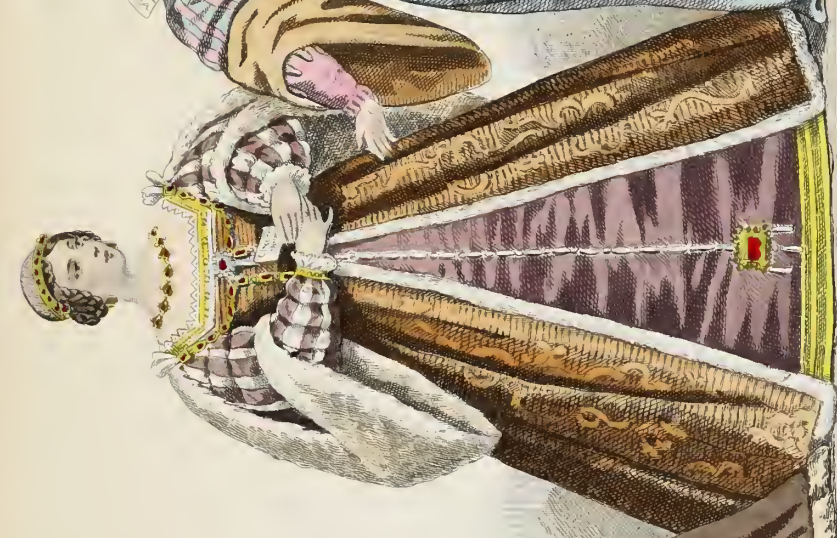
Ordinary wool for women's garments was sufficiently plentiful in France. The finer cloths were generally manufactured from English and Spanish wools. Lower Brittany and Picardy supplied, it is true, a somewhat finer quality, which was used in the manufacture of certain cloths, and in particular for one called *camelot*. Linen-cloth was produced in considerable quantities, but was inferior in quality to the Dutch linen, which was much esteemed, and formed an important item in the trousseaux of young girls.





Mrs. de Lamoignon

Francis the first
1515 to 1547



Survivor

Francis the First
1530 to 1545

HISTORY OF FASHION

CHAPTER IX.

REIGN OF FRANCIS I.

1515 TO 1545.

The court of Francis I.—A speech of Charles V.—The king's liberality—Order of the Cordelière—Word-paintings of the fashions of the day, by Rabelais—Costumes of the seasons—Feather-fans—Sunshades—The “hoche-plis” or vertugadin—Mme. de Tressan saves her cousin's life—Satires and songs—Mdlle. de Lacépède—“Contenances”—Silk shoes with slashes—Head-dress called a “passe filon”—Increase of love of dress—The bean-flower—Artistic head-dresses—Twists of hair called *ratraprenades*—Ferronières—Coaches in Paris ; their influence on the fashions.

UNDER the gallant knight, Francis I., the court of France shone with a new and more refined splendour than that of the Middle Ages, and to this was added all the magnificence of Italian art. An eye-witness has described the court of Francis for us with characteristic and intelligent simplicity. Michael Suriano, the Venetian ambassador, makes the following remarks:—

“His Majesty expends 300,000 crowns on himself and his court, of which 70,000 are for the queen. The king wants 100,000 crowns for building abodes for himself. Hunting, including provisions, chariots, nets, dogs, falcons, and other trifles, costs more than 150,000 crowns. Lesser amusements and luxuries, such as bouquets, masquerades, and other diversions, 100,000 crowns. Dresses, tapestries, and private gifts cost as much more. The lodgings of the king's household, of the Swiss, French, and Scottish guards, more than 200,000. I am now speaking of men. As for the ladies, their salaries, it is said, amount to nearly 300,000 crowns. Thus there is a firm belief that the king's person, his household, his children, and the presents he makes, cost yearly a million and a half crowns. If you saw the French court the sum would not surprise you. There are generally six, eight, ten, even twelve thousand horses in the stables. Prodigality is boundless ;

visitors increase the expenditure by at least one-third, on account of the mules, carts, litters, horses, and servants that are necessary for them, and that cost more than double the ordinary prices."

On his journey through France, Charles V. saw the treasury and the crown jewels. "There is a weaver of mine at Augsburg," he disdainfully exclaimed, "who could buy up all that!" It is not the less true, notwithstanding the words of the envious Charles V., that the court of Francis displayed the utmost magnificence, and that the king himself lived in the midst of dazzling splendour. The court of this sovereign, nicknamed "Long-nose," or "Nosey" by the people, was a rendezvous for the pursuit of pleasure.

Judging from prints of the time, the court of Francis I. differed considerably from that of his predecessors. The ladies no longer took up their station near the queen exclusively, nor did the men remain by the king. The two sexes mingled together at the daily receptions, and Francis I. formed a court in the true sense of the word. His liberality was very great; he gave away presents of clothes far beyond any gifts of his predecessors. Brantôme tell us that many ladies possessed wardrobes and coffers so full of clothes given them by the king, "that it was a great fortune."

Women soon acquired extraordinary influence; everything was in their hands, "even to the appointing of generals and captains." Ladies of the palace were nominated and lived at the Louvre. They belonged to an order of knighthood called the Order of "la Cordelière," intended to reward the most prudent and virtuous women among the nobility. Francis I. almost invariably wore a very splendid costume, and was considered the finest gentleman in the kingdom. We are not concerned here with the numerous different fashions adopted by the king and his nobles, suffice it to mention that the "robes" of the gentlemen of the time were no whit less magnificent than those of the ladies, and that consequently there was a struggle for pre-eminence between the two sexes.

Feminine dress was coquettish, and generally speaking, very graceful in form. François Rabelais, that encyclopædic writer

who treated of every subject, whether serious or trifling, describes the fashions of his time in the following words :—

“ The ladies wore scarlet or crimson stockings, the said stockings reaching three inches above the knee, and the edge thereof finely embroidered or cut out. The garters were of the same colour as their bracelets, and fitted tight both above and below the knee. The shoes or slippers of crimson, red, or violet velvet, were snipped like the edges of a crab’s claw. Over the chemise they wore a fine vasquine (corset) of rich silk camlet; on the vasquine they placed the vertugade (hoop) of white, red, salmon-coloured, or grey silk. Above this the cotte, in silver tissue, embroidered in fine gold needlework, produced a charming effect. Or, if it pleased them better, and was in accordance with the weather, their cottés were of satin, or damask, or of velvet, orange-coloured, salmon, green, grey, blue, light yellow, crimson, or white; or of gold cloth, silver cloth, or embroidery, according to the festivals. Dresses were made, according to the season, in cloth of gold crossed with silver, of red satin embroidered in gold canetille, of white, blue, and black silk, of silk serge or camlet, of velvet, of cloth, of silver, of drawn gold, or of velvet or satin with gold threads variously interwoven. In summer ladies sometimes wore, instead of dresses, graceful marlottes (or wrappers) of the afore-said stuffs, or bernés (sleeveless marlottes), after the Moorish style, in violet velvet ornamented at the seams with small Indian pearls. And at all times they wore the beautiful bouquet of feathers (or panache), according to the colour of their muffs, thickly spangled with gold.”

In winter, silk dresses of the colours just described were lined with costly furs.

To complete the costume we must add rosaries, ornaments in goldsmith’s work hanging from the girdle, rings, gold chains, jewelled necklaces, and carbuncles, balas rubies, diamonds, and sapphires; finally emeralds, turquoises, garnets, beryls, pearls, and “unions d’excellence,” as Rabelais says.

That great man almost seems to have written expressly in order to give us these details of Parisian dress. He omits nothing,

neither shape, nor price, nor colour. He instructs us as to the fashions of each season; he mentions fans, and "éventoirs" in feathers.

We observe, however, that there is no mention of autumn fashions in his interesting description. We must infer, therefore, that the fall of the year was included half in the summer and half in the winter season, and that the ladies of the sixteenth century were as yet unacquainted with that refinement of fashion at the present day, the autumn costume.

Umbrellas, which at first were ill-made, did not "take" in France. They were considered inconvenient things. "There is no season more inimical," says Montaigne, "than the burning heat of a hot sun, for the umbrellas that have been used in Italy from the time of the ancient Romans, fatigue the arm more than they relieve the head."

Head-gear varied with the seasons. In winter it was worn according to the French, in spring to the Spanish, in summer to the Turkish fashion; except on Sundays and festivals, when women covered their heads in the French style, as being more honourable and more suggestive of "matronly chastity." On those occasions they generally wore a velvet hood with hanging curtain.

The cap of the women of Lorraine consisted of a piece of stuff wound about the head in cylinder shape; that of the Basque women resembled a horn of plenty upside down, it was made of white lawn trimmed with ribbon; and that of the Bayonne women was a "guimpe" arranged like a turban, with a little peak or horn in the front.

The greatest innovation in feminine costume was the appearance of the vertugadin, or hoop, in 1530. Dresses were stretched over wide, stiff petticoats mounted on hoops of iron, wood, or whalebone. A band of coarse linen, supported by wire, lifted them up round the waist.

It is said that Louise de Montaynard, the wife of François de Tressan, contrived, by the aid of her hoop, to save the life of her cousin, the brave Duc de Montmorency. The duke was hard beset by a great number of the enemy in the town of Béziers.

Louise bade him hide under her huge bell-shaped hoop, and thus saved him from the vengeance that threatened him.

The fashion of wearing three gowns, one over the other, shows the prejudices of the time with respect to distinctions in dress:—

“ Pour une cotte qu’a la femme du bourgeois,
La dame en a sur soy l’une sur l’autre trois,
Que toutes elle faict également paroistre,
Et par là se faict plus que bourgeoise cognoistre.”¹

Songs and satires against “vertugadins” abounded. The “Débat et Complainte des Meuniers et Meunières à l’Encontre des Vertugadins” appeared in 1556, and the “Blason des Basquines et Vertugales, avec la Remontrance qu’ont faict quelques Dames, quand on leur a remontré qu’il n’en falloit plus porter,” in 1563. Next came the “Plaisante Complainte . . .,” by Guillaume Hyver, beginning as follows:—

“ Ung temps fut avant telz usaiges,
Lorsque les femmes estoient sages. . . .”²

This epigram was quickly answered:—

“ La vertugalle nous aurons,
Maulgré eulx et leur faulse envie,
Et le busque au sein porterons ;
N’est-ce pas usance jolye ?”³

Charles IX., Henri III., and Henri IV., all issued edicts against the hoop. But far from disappearing, it became more and more generally worn. Little shopkeepers imitated the great ladies ; and in the “Discours sur la Mode,” published in 1613, we read as follows:—

“ Le grand vertugadin est commun aux Françoises,
Dont usent maintenant librement les bourgeoises,

¹ “For one coat that the wife of a bourgeois wears
The great lady puts on three, one over the other ;
And letting them all be seen equally,
She makes herself known for more than a bourgeoisie.”

² “There was a time, before these customs,
When women were wise.”

³ “The ‘vertugal’ we will have,
Spite of them and their false envy ;
And the busk at the breast we will wear ;
Is it not a pretty usage ?”

Tout de mesme que font les dames, si ce n'est
 Qu'avec un plus petit la bourgeoise paroist ;
 Car les dames ne sont pas bien accommodées
 Si leur vertugadin n'est large dix coudées." ⁴

In Paris, the royal edicts against hoops had fallen into disuse, but in the provinces certain parliaments had maintained a merciless severity. It is recorded that at Aix a Demoiselle de Lacépède, the widow of the Sieur de Lacoste, having been accused before the court of wearing a hoop of seditious width, appeared before the counsellors and gave her word of honour that the "exaggerated size of her hips, which was the cause of complaint, was simply a gift of nature." The judges laughed, and she was acquitted.

The fashion of vertugadins was especially pleasing to women of humble birth, who also wore hooped gowns, and thus, like high-born dames and maidens, attained a likeness to pyramidal towers or gigantic beehives. This extraordinary whim of fashion was destined to reappear, with various modifications, at different periods.

Muffs, like those of the present day, were already used by women of rank. They were called "contenances." Long gold chains, or cordelières, were twisted in the waistband, and fell almost to the feet.

The women vied with the men in splendour of dress. At court or in town they wore an under-skirt, showing below the gown, which was made with pointed bodice, the skirt widely opened in front, with narrow sleeves to the elbow, where they suddenly widened, and were bordered with lace or fur. The bodice was cut low, disclosing a collerette of fine open-worked cambric or of lace.

Silk and satin shoes were still in fashion, widely opened on the

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 For the great ladies are not satisfied
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instep, which, it must be owned, was not conducive to the elegance of the foot. Some ladies preferred slashed shoes.

But if there was little change in shoes, there was much in the fashion of head-dresses. Small rounded coiffures in satin or velvet, forming a harmonious frame to the face, succeeded to the ancient head-gear; or else graceful turbans, whose delicate softness could be perceived beneath a network of pearls or precious stones. The head-dress "*à la passe-filon*," dating from the time of Louis XI., retained its place:—

" Les cheveux en passe fillon,
Et l'œil gay en émerillon,"^b

says Clément Marot.

The hair was sometimes worn in curls round the face, and falling on the neck. Many women, however, imitated Marguerite of Navarre, by wearing ringlets on each side of the temples, and drawing back the hair above the forehead. Wire pins were first imported from England about 1545; before this invention ladies made use of extremely fine and flexible wooden pins or skewers. We have already mentioned these.

There were, in fact, two distinct periods in the fashions under Francis I.

From 1515 to 1526 feminine attire was still influenced by the Middle Ages, not only as regards form and cut, but also as to colouring, which was somewhat grave. Ladies were averse to low dresses, nor did they care for any fanciful trimmings. Some few even abstained from jewels and diamonds; their dress was graceful, but without studied elegance.

From 1530 to 1545, on the contrary, tastes wholly changed. Women began to wear necklaces and beads, light-coloured stuffs, and rich trimmings; they became accustomed to baring the bosom and shoulders, and the habit grew yet more upon them. Dress became a mass of small details, and women were ingenious in contriving not to omit one of the thousand trifles intended to add to their attractions.

In one word, coquetry began to wield its exclusive sway over

^b "Netted hair and hawk-bright eye."

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the actions of women. To please became their only business. They used perfumes of all sorts—violet powder, Cyprus powder, civet, musk, orange flower, ambergris, rosemary, essence of roses. They refreshed their complexions with an infusion of the bean-flower, and washed with musk soap.

In the latter part of the reign of Francis I., feminine head-dresses assumed a thoroughly artistic character, of almost exaggerated grace. The Church and certain writers began to murmur, but with as little effect as in the fifteenth century. A book entitled “Remontrance Charitable aux Dames et Damoiselles de France sur leurs Ornaments dissolus,” implored women to renounce their “twists of hair,” which the author calls “ratrapenades.” Another work, “La Gauléographie,” thundered against the indecency of plaits; and a pamphlet, “La Source d’Honneur,” bestowed good advice on women, which they were careful not to follow.

La belle Ferronnière invented the head-dress which bore her name. A skull-cap of velvet or satin, splendidly embroidered, was set amidst curls that only reached to the shoulders. A narrow ribbon, or chain, in the centre of which was fixed a jewel or *ferronnière*, passed across the brow and was fastened in a large knot at the back of the head.

Another style of head-dress formed the hair into bands half concealed by lappets falling over the cheeks and a veil; the folds at one end were gathered together into a golden tulip terminating in a cluster of precious stones. The art of the goldsmith was thus combined with that of the hairdresser, and the most celebrated beauties adorned themselves in every conceivable way.

They must have dreaded, especially after nightfall, the numerous thieves abounding in the capital. Fancy going on foot so dazzlingly arrayed!

It is well to bear in mind that in the time of Francis I. there were but three coaches in all Paris: one belonged to Queen Claude of France, a daughter of Louis XII.; another to Diane de Poitiers, who at the age of thirty-two had lost her husband, Louis de Brézé, Count de Maulevrier, High Seneschal of Normandy, and who always wore the widow’s garb even in the days of her greatest

prosperity ; and the third to a gentleman named René de Laval, who could not mount on horseback on account of his enormous size.

Our ancestors had nothing to fear from blocks of carriages, nor from the mud by which we are often splashed in crowded streets.

At the end of the fifteenth century, Gilles le Maître, High President of the Paris Parliament, executed a contract with his farmers, by which the latter were bound "on the eves of the four great festivals of the year, and at the time of the vintage, to provide him with a covered cart, with good clean straw inside, in which his wife, Marie Sapin, and his daughter, Geneviève, could be comfortably seated, and also to bring a foal and a she-ass, on which their serving-women should ride, while he himself should go first, mounted on his mule, and accompanied by his dog, who would follow him on foot."

Truly a humble conveyance for the wife of a High President, who himself rode modestly on a mule !

If we examine the prints of the time of Henri IV., we shall be at a loss to conceive how such very smart personages could pass through the streets on foot, and with Brantôme, we shall begin to admire Marguerite de Valois's litters, as represented by the artists of that period, "heavily gilt, and splendidly covered and painted with many fine devices, and her coaches and carriages the same."

The succeeding century witnessed great changes. The wife of the High President, Christophe de Thou, was the first Frenchwoman, not a princess, to whom permission to possess a carriage was granted. The bourgeois long envied her that delightful privilege !

It is difficult to understand how ladies, dressed in the costumes handed down to us by artists of the time, contrived to get into their litters. These must have been very roomy, and much like our modern closed carriages. It is true, however, that a litter was used by one person only.

The use of carriages has contributed to the development of fashion, for by their means ladies in very light attire are enabled to go long distances, from one house to the other, without danger

from exposure to the weather, and without attracting the attention of thieves.

Hence, from the first appearance of coaches to the elegant carriages of our own day, a particular style of dress has existed, suitable only for persons possessing equipages, and ridiculous when worn by pedestrians through rain, mud, and dust.





Henry VI

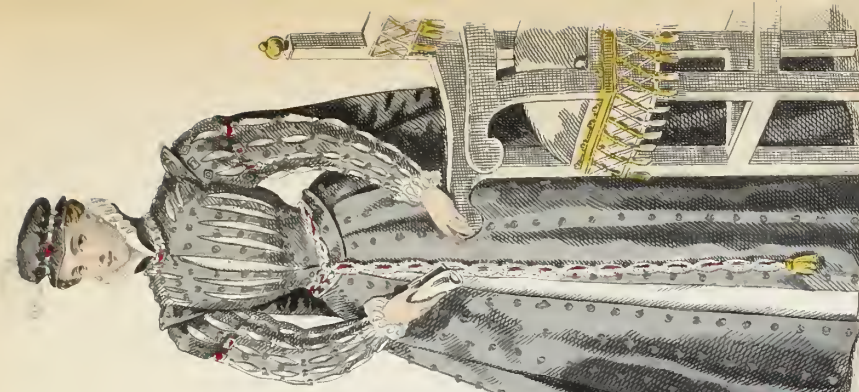
1547



HISTORY OF FASHION

Henry II

1555 to 1568



Maria D. P. 1881

B. W. 1881

CHAPTER X.

REIGN OF HENRI II.

1547 TO 1558.

Fashions under Henri II.—The ruff—A satirical print of the time—Catherine de Médicis eats soup—The Italian taste—Regulations for dress—Crimson—Who shall wear silk?—Lines on velvet, by Ronsard—Rondeau—"Collet monté"—Spring-water—Style of gowns and head-dresses—Wired sleeves—Girdles—Caps, bonnets, and hoods—The "touret de nez"—The "coffin à roupies"—Shoes—A quotation from Rabelais.

THE taste for display had received an irresistible impulse; dress was a fascinating pursuit, and one well adapted to our manners and customs. In the reigns succeeding to that of Francis I. there was neither a reaction, nor any very remarkable novelty.

The principal characteristic of feminine attire, however, in the time of Henri II. was the amplitude of skirts and sleeves. Costumes were alternately either of extreme splendour, or of a grave, not to say sombre appearance. It has been observed: "The sixteenth century offers a curious mixture of very striking and of very simple costumes."

Catherine de Médicis, the wife of Henri II., who was an Italian, introduced "ruffs" into France.

The ruff was a sort of double collar, in stiff goffered plaits. It completely encircled the throat, and sometimes rose above the ears. Ruffs became immensely fashionable, both for men and women.

A print of the time proves this. It represents a shop in which three grotesque figures are starching and ironing ruffs. A lady, seated, is having her own ironed, and a gentleman is bringing others. Death is seen on the threshold of the shop, on the right. On the margin there are half a dozen inscriptions in German and

French against the fashion of wearing ruffs. Beneath the engraving are four German and four French lines, of a highly satirical nature :—

“Hommes et femmes empèsent par orgueil
Fraises longues pour ne trouver leur pareil ;
Mais en enfer le diable soufflera,
Et à brusler les âmes le feu allumera.”⁶

Brantôme, the historian, relates an amusing anecdote concerning the starched ruffs. He tells us that on one occasion M. de Fresnes-Forget, in conversing with Queen Catherine, expressed his surprise that women should wear such deep ruffs, and affected to doubt that they could eat their soup when thus attired.

Catherine laughed. The next moment a valet handed her a *bouillie* for collation. The queen asked for a long-handled spoon, ate her *bouillie* easily and without soiling her ruff, and then said, “You see, Monsieur de Fresnes, that with a little intelligence one can manage anything.”

French ladies copied the Italian fashions in their dress, but with more grandeur and magnificence. The influence of the Renaissance still prevailed, and art regulated the style of dress to a considerable extent. There was little change in the actual shape of the garments worn, more especially among the middle classes.

It became necessary to restrict foreign importation, in order not to crush our home manufactures, and Henri II. also thought it right to issue edicts with reference to propriety of attire, and to the diversity of ranks as indicated by dress. Laws were even passed concerning the quality and colour of stuffs.

Thus, no woman, not being a princess, might wear a costume entirely of crimson; the wives of gentlemen might have one part only of their under dress of that colour. Maids of honour to the queen, or to the princesses of the blood, might wear velvet gowns of any colour except crimson; the attendants on other princesses

⁶ “Men and women out of pride
Starch their long ruffs until they find no equal ;
But in hell the devil will blow (the bellows),
And the fire will be lighted to burn souls.”

were restricted to velvet, either black or *tanné*, viz. an ordinary red, not crimson.

The wealthy bourgeois, without exception, longed to wear the forbidden material, and thus to vie with the great ladies; but their ambitious desires were necessarily thwarted, and the law only allowed them velvet when made into petticoats and sleeves.

Working-women were forbidden to wear silk. This was an extremely expensive material, and women would make any sacrifice to procure it.

But as we have already remarked, nothing is so difficult of application as a sumptuary law. The wives of gentlemen, of bourgeois, and of artisans were loud in complaint.

Then was the lawgiver moved with compassion, and gave permission for bands of goldsmith's work to be worn on the head, for gold braid as borderings to dresses of ceremony, for necklaces and belts of the same precious metal.

He allowed working-women to trim their gowns with borders or linings of silk; and silk was also allowed for false sleeves, the whole dress only of such costly material was forbidden.

But just in proportion as the relaxation of the first rigorous enactments was reasonable and right, so did the authorities show themselves stern and severe towards those women who ventured to transgress the king's commands.

Ronsard, the poet, exclaims admiringly, like the clever courtier he was :—

“ Le velours, trop commun en France,
 Sous toi reprend son vieil honneur ;
 Tellement que ta remontrance
 Nous a fait voir la différence
 Du valet et de son seigneur,
 Et du muguet chargé de soye,
 Qui à tes princes s'esgaloit,
 Et, riche en drap de soye, alloit
 Faisant flamber toute la voye.
 Les tusques ingénieuses
 J'à trop de volouter s'usoyent
 Pour nos femmes délicieuses,
 Qui, en robes trop précieuses,
 Du rang des nobles abusoyent.

Mais or la laine mesprisée
 Reprend son premier ornement ;
 Tant vaut le grave enseignement
 De ta parole autorisée."⁷

Starched and plaited linen ruffs, or "rotondes," were first worn in this reign, also Spanish capes and "collets montés."

The proverbial expression, a "collet monté," was applied then as now to persons who affected great gravity of manner. It owes its origin to the severity of the Spanish dress, which was adopted in certain quarters in France.

Catherine de Médicis, who deemed it incumbent on her to grieve unceasingly for her royal husband, manifested her sorrow by means of the widow's dress she habitually wore. Her costume was remarkably austere. It consisted of a sort of cap, with the edge bent down in the middle of the forehead, a collerette with large gofferings, a tightly-fitting buttoned bodice, a wide plaited skirt, and a long mantle with "collet montant," or high stand-up collar.

This simplicity of dress on the part of the queen-mother formed an exception to the boundless caprices of the ladies who formed a brilliant court circle around Catherine de Médicis. While confining herself to black, she made no objection to the splendid attire of her companions. Coquetry reached to the highest pitch. The beautiful Diana of Poitiers preserved her beauty by bathing her face, even in winter, in spring water. This heroic practice

⁷ "Velvet, grown too common in France,
 Resumes, beneath your sway, its former honour ;
 So that your remonstrance
 Has made us see the difference
 Between the servant and his lord,
 And the coxcomb, silk-bedecked,
 Who equalled your princes,
 And rich in cloth of silk went glittering
 On his way, showing off the bravery of his attire.
 I have more indulgence for our fair women
 Who, in dresses far too precious,
 Usurp the rank of the nobles.
 But now, the long-despised wool
 Resumes its former station."

did not come into general use, notwithstanding its supposed efficacy.

The form of women's attire and head-dresses in the reign of Henri II. was really admirable. There can be no more complicated needlework than that employed on the bodice of a dress as represented in an engraving of 1558. It is trimmed with two little epaulettes, and is made with a basque barely three inches in depth, and far from being "décolleté," it is high to the throat, like a man's jacket (sayon).

Occasionally the fair wearer threw this bodice open, in order to show the pourpoint or vest underneath, and generally it was also slashed either in front or behind, or on the shoulders. By this means it looked less thick, and kept the chest less warm.

The sleeves harmonized perfectly with the gown, particularly with the bodice. They were not wide, though ten years previously they had been puffed, but were slashed like the bodice. They diminished in size from the shoulder to the wrist, and were slashed from top to bottom. They were frequently trimmed with beads, and still more frequently with silk riband.

Certain ladies of high birth ornamented them with "fers," or delicate pieces of goldsmith's work, not unlike metal buttons.

A curious appendage to the costume of the most fashionable ladies, such as we are now describing it, existed; behind the sleeve there falls straight down a false sleeve or "mancheron," fastened to the epaulette. We have already mentioned these.

The high collerette, detached from the bodice and embroidered or goffered, was attached to a light cambric handkerchief covering the throat, hence its name "gorgias," from "la gorge," the throat.

When ladies preferred a low-cut bodice, they would wear with it a very large "gorgias," covering the shoulders and neck, and of such material as to add to the beauty of the costume.

Skirts were plain, and slightly open in front. A girdle, knotted at the waist, fell gracefully from the peak or point of the bodice, in front, down to the bottom of the skirt, or was worn hanging from the side, like the rosary of a nun at the present day.

Exquisite lace, imported from Venice, completed the adornment of feminine costume, and made it of immense value.

Various styles of head-gear were in fashion, and were worn without distinction by persons in all ranks of society. There were caps, bonnets, and hoods.

The hair was first kept in its place by a little bag called a "cale," and then the head-dress was put on. Cales remained in use for a long time, and young girls of the class known as "the people" were subsequently called by the name.

The cap was toque-shaped, and generally of velvet, with a white feather over the right ear. The constant movement of the feather, waving in every breeze, produced a charming effect, and conferred on the fair wearers a little cavalier air that poets have frequently sung, and that modern novel-writers have not overlooked.

Hats, which seem to have been less generally worn than caps or hoods, were usually of oval shape. They were high with wide brims, and were made in rich materials, or in very fine felt.

Hoods (a favourite head-dress of Catherine de Médicis) were also generally preferred by Parisian women, and were very like those of modern times. They were made of velvet, cloth, or silk, with deep fronts, strings, and a curtain. By a royal edict, velvet hoods were forbidden to all except "the ladies of the court;" on which the bourgeois ingeniously concealed the velvet under gold and silver embroidery, or a mass of beads and jewels.

The coif suggested the ancient shape of the hood, of which we shall speak hereafter. It was padded, and had a short veil falling down at the back.

"For going out in cold weather," observes M. Jules Quicherat, "a square of stuff was fastened to the strings of the hood, and covered all the face from the eyes downwards, like the fringe of a mask." This was called either a "touret de nez," or a "coffin à roupies," according to the humour of the satirists, whose jests, however, did not prevent ladies from wearing it.

We must add that ladies also wore capes with hoods in the severe cold of winter.

Nor must we omit the question of clothing for the feet. This

is one of the most important parts of dress, and the woman with the prettiest shoes will generally be found the most graceful in other respects. Ladies wore shoes and slippers, both adapted for indoor wear only, and quite unsuited for the hard stones and thick mud of Paris. In the streets there were but few coaches or litters, and so ladies wore pattens with cork soles, over their shoes or slippers, to protect them from cold and damp.





Francis II
1900



HISTORY OF FASHION



Francis II
1850



Colours and Patterns
1850

CHAPTER XI.

REIGN OF FRANCIS II.

1559 TO 1560.

The earliest queens of fashion—Mary Stuart's costumes ; her jewels—Description of bodices and sleeves of that period—Crosses—The "loup" or small mask—Coiffure "en raquette"—An anecdote concerning high heels—Regulations respecting fashion—Remark of a lady of our own day on distinctions in dress—Exordium of the Edict of July 12, 1549—Maximum of marriage portions—The first knitted silk stockings.

WOMEN of celebrity exercise a great influence on dress in general; and certain historical personages of the sixteenth century gave laws on the question of Fashion. Whether their celebrity overruled the caprices of their contemporaries, or whether their perfect taste compelled the approbation of the dandies and fine ladies of their time, certain it is that their portraits are typical, and could we be shown any of the costumes in which they have been painted, the original wearers would immediately be suggested to us.

Such a celebrity was Mary Stuart, niece to the Guises, and wife of Francis II., whose misfortunes and tragical fate have made her a deeply interesting character.

There existed, only a few years ago, among the rare books, manuscripts, and prints in the library of St. Geneviève, in Paris, two sketches in coloured chalk, being probably copies of portraits of the Queen of Scots, painted from life by the famous François Clouet, about the year 1558.

Those sketches, among many others, have been removed from St. Geneviève to the National Library, where they are less easy of access to the public than they formerly were in the less pretentious establishment of the Place du Panthéon.

Let us picture Mary Stuart in her youth, and again in her widow's garb. Nothing can surpass the purity and delicacy of

outline in those two portraits. Calm intelligence sits on her brow, and shines from her dark eyes. Her head is dressed in the Italian fashion, as was then the custom at court; a high collerette encircles the throat, round which is a pearl necklace.

On the day of her marriage with Francis II., the beautiful queen wore a gown of dark blue velvet, "covered with jewels, and white embroidery of beautiful workmanship, so that it was admirable to see." Two young ladies, standing behind her, bore her long train. On her head she wore so splendid a coronet of jewels, that it was valued by many persons at 300,000 crowns, about 1,800,000 francs of our present money.

At balls, the queen of Francis II. wore a train nearly twelve yards in length; it was borne after her by a gentleman. Nothing could be more majestic than the royal mantle thrown over the gown on occasions of ceremony. Mézeray describes Mary Stuart as wearing a ruff open in front and standing high behind. Her hair is arranged in two curls that only cover part of the ear; her crown is placed on a wide and starched coif, coming down on the forehead, and widening at the sides. She was fond of jewels. When, on the death of Francis, she was setting out for Scotland, her uncle, the Cardinal de Guise, suggested that she should leave her jewels behind, until he could send them to her by some safe hand.

"If I am not afraid for myself," said Mary Stuart, "why should I fear for my jewels?"

But we must now leave individual history, in order to continue our account of feminine attire in general. At the period of which we are now treating, the shape of dresses was extraordinarily elegant, and they have often been cut on the same outlines since, in the varying phases of French Fashion. It will be observed that the bodice is generally provided with epaulettes, and with a basque two or three inches in depth. It was usually worn high up to the throat, and opened sometimes between the throat and the waist, in order to display the under-garments, especially a waistcoat or "pourpoint" of handsome material. Sleeves were moderate in size, and became narrower as they approached the wrist; they were

drawn in at equal distances so as to form puffs, and thus were not unlike the leg-of-mutton sleeves in fashion at the Restoration. Occasionally the bodice was slashed, and the openings of both bodice and sleeves were drawn together by knots of pearls, or the "fers," of which we have already spoken. An embroidered or goffered collerette stood up round the throat; it was attached to a cambric handkerchief, that still bore its old name of "gorgias." When low bodices were worn, the gorgias covered the shoulders and neck.

Gowns of silk or velvet, of light or dark tint, and gowns of crimson Genoa velvet, were opened in front, over an underskirt of some pale colour. The opening, beginning in a point at the waist, became gradually wider, somewhat in the shape of a pyramid. A girdle of beads or gold hung from the waist, and was often connected with ornaments of the same nature trimming the bodice.

With a standing-up collerette there was no need of a necklace. But with low-cut bodices, ladies wore pearl or gold necklaces, from which was usually hung a valuable cross. At the present day also crosses are very frequently worn. In a certain collection there is a necklace of the sixteenth century, composed of six cameos of tragic and comic heads.

We must add that there were ladies who wore necklaces even with standing-up ruffs, as may be observed in the fourth figure of our engraving, which gives the costume of a French lady in the suite of Mary Stuart.

The wives of nobles and of great merchants used both rouge and white paint on their faces, and some of them adopted the "loup," or small black velvet mask, to preserve their complexion from sunburn. Masks received the name of *loup*, or wolf, because at first young children were frightened by them.

The head-dress of the period was the "cale," or little bag in which women imprisoned their hair, and above this they placed a cap or toque with white feathers. They retained hoods also, or else they wore coifs, generally of velvet, bent down over the forehead, and with a veil attached behind. Little could be seen of the hair, beyond two rolls, one on either side of the temples.

Lastly, some ladies, Mary Stuart and her attendants in particular, had their hair curled, confined it in a light net, and encircled it with a diadem of beads or metal.

The coiffure "*en raquette*" consisted of open basket-work plaits.

Low shoes and slippers were still exclusively worn; but when it was necessary to leave home and brave the mud, or when ladies wished to add to their deficient stature, they wore light pattens with cork soles over their house shoes. In the latter case, pattens occasionally became perfect pedestals, marvellously increasing the height of dwarfs, and laying them open to many ill-natured jests.

"I recollect," says Brantôme, "that one day, at court, a very fine and beautiful woman was looking at a tapestry whereon Diana and her nymphs were very innocently depicted in short garments, and displaying their beautiful feet and legs. Beside this lady stood one of her companions, who was very short and small, and who also was admiring the tapestry. 'Ah, my dear,' said her friend, 'if we were all dressed after that fashion, you would not gain by it, for your high pattens would be seen. Be thankful to the times and to the long skirts we wear that hide your legs so neatly—the which, with their great pattens, are more like clubs than legs; for if any one had no weapon for fighting, he need but to cut off your leg, and holding it at the knee, he would find your foot and shoe and patten would strike right well.'"

May we not say the same thing at the present day? Now that little women wear inordinately high heels to give themselves the appearance of middle height, dwarfs are induced to think themselves almost giants.

But without further digression let us return to the fashions of 1559-60, and to the edicts of the period.

When we speak of past fashions, alas! we must always mention sumptuary laws at the same time; that is to say, remedial measures against the excesses of caprice and luxury. As if wisdom could be decreed by law!

We know their unsuccessful results. But even at the present day, when difference of rank is no longer marked by difference of dress, we sometimes meet with persons who are indignant with a

working woman if she ventures to wear a silk gown or a velvet cape on Sunday.

"No, I cannot understand the Government not interfering," exclaimed a charming "great lady," the other day in my presence. "Only a week ago I was almost elbowed in the Champs Elysées by a girl with a gown identically like my own! It is really disgraceful!"

In a conciliatory tone I replied, "Probably she had good taste like yourself."

"It is disgusting! because, after all, the rest of the costume did not harmonize with the gown, and the effect was wretched."

"You must have been glad of that, madame."

"Glad?"

"Yes; for harmony is everything, or almost everything in dress; and if that young workwoman could not display an Indian shawl like yours, you have nothing to complain of."

"On the contrary, I do complain. Extravagance and 'equality' in dress are the ruin of scores of working girls. There ought to be a law against it."

"There were laws in former times, madame," I replied; "but they were an absolute failure."

And then I repeated almost word for word what I have said farther back in this book, concerning reforms imposed by law. But all my arguments failed to convince my hearer, who was blinded by her prejudices. It is certain that sumptuary laws, even if they could be revived at the present day, would be as ineffectual as in the Middle Ages or the Renaissance. Neither fines nor even imprisonment would put a stop to coquetry, in whatever rank of life.

The opinions of my fair friend were probably the opinions of ladies in the reign of Henri II., for in the exordium of an edict issued by that king on July 12, 1549, we read that "gentlemen and their wives went to excessive expense for their gold and silver stuffs, their embroideries, braids, borderings, goldsmiths' work, cords, cannetilles, velvets, satins, or silks striped with gold and silver." These articles, therefore, were forbidden, except to

princes and princesses. Those exalted persons, however, set a bad example in the matter, that was too often followed.

The chapter of prohibitions having been thus begun, arbitrary measures became numerous. A maximum was actually fixed for marriage portions! Fathers and mothers, or grandparents giving their daughter or granddaughter in marriage, might not endow her with more than 10,000 livres (Tournois)! Truly a most obnoxious regulation! for was not such a law an interference with marriage, and an encroachment on the rights of parents?

The wives of plebeians were forbidden to wear coats like ladies, and head-dresses of velvet. Dark colours only were permitted them, and common materials.

But of what avail are severe laws, when broken? The stream of fashion was in favour of splendid garments, and of all the aids that are given by dress.

The first hand-knitted silk stockings were worn by King Henri II., at the wedding of Marguerite of France with Emmanuel-Philibert of Savoy, in the month of June, 1559. The common people, and even the well-to-do classes, continued for a long time to wear stockings made of pieces of stuff sewed together.

Extravagance and luxury pursued their way, and became more versatile and ruinous than ever. Men and women spent their money, as well as money that was not their own, on dress. Frenchmen and Frenchwomen seemed bent on proving themselves absolute arbiters of fashion.

Now to hold the sceptre of taste and toilet involves obligations as onerous as nobility itself, and to excite the admiration and envy of coquettes is a costly privilege.



CHAPTER XII.

REIGN OF CHARLES IX.

1560 TO 1574.

The wars of religion—The fashions of Italy are brought across the Alps, and are welcomed in France—Effects of the expeditions into Italy—Articles from Venice and Genoa are very fashionable—A cloud of sugar-plums, and a shower of scents—Effeminate style of dress—Charles IX. and his Edicts against extravagant display—Fashion rebels against sumptuary laws—Women of high rank, bourgeois, widows, and spinsters—Wedding dresses—Observations of a Venetian ambassador—"Corps piqué"—Drawers—Paint—Cosmetics—Breast mirrors, girdle mirrors—Court dresses—"Arcelets."

HITHERTO we have seen only the brilliant side of the Renaissance, so to speak, and its multiplicity of arts, fêtes, and ceremonials conducive to splendour and display. Let us now glance at the darker side of the picture, at the shadows cast by the religious wars, and let us note the results of more than one disaster.

The name of Charles IX. immediately recalls to our recollection the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and fills us with horror and dismay; that of Henri III. brings before our minds the League, with its grotesque and sanguinary incidents, and its fatal termination by the dagger of Jacques Clément. At the same time, both reigns afford us matter of a highly interesting nature in connexion with our subject. In no other way can these reigns be attractive to us; nor will the horrors of those times ever be repeated, but the fashions of the sixteenth century have, on the contrary, already reappeared in a certain measure, and at different periods. They will revive completely, perhaps, at some future day. There is nothing more present, sometimes, than the past, especially in matters of dress, as every Frenchwoman knows. Why then should not our fair contemporaries once more attire themselves in the fashions that were so becoming to their predecessors?

When foreign fashions were likely to add to their attractions, Frenchwomen have never refused to adopt them. They have alternately worn pretty articles of dress from Spain, or copied the costumes of our fair English neighbours, to which they imparted an elegance all their own. They have seldom cared for the severe German style, but from Italy they have frequently borrowed some of her Southern graces, offspring of that sunny land and deep blue sky !

Thus, in the sixteenth century, did Italian fashions cross the Alps with Catherine de Médicis. Heaven only knows whether the fine ladies of the court were most interested in the bloodshed of the fatal night of August 24, 1572, or in the quantity of Milanese silks imported about the same time. I have not the heart to blame them for turning away from such frightful episodes.

But wherefore this love for the products of Italy, for the perfumed sachets of Venice, for the gold filagree-work of Genoa? Until that period Frenchwomen appear to have been unacquainted even with the names of the countries which form the shores of the Adriatic, and suddenly they become versed in all the minute details of the costumes of those countries !

This must not surprise my readers. Only that I fear to be tedious, I would remind them that little things may spring from great, as well as great things from little, and I would enter upon a lengthy historico-philosophic dissertation.

Let it suffice to state that the filagree-work of Genoa, and the perfumed sachets of Venice, found their way into France as a consequence of the fatal expeditions of Charles VIII., Louis XII., and Francis I. into Italy. From Italy also came cambric handkerchiefs embroidered in tent-stitch with red silk.

I need not dilate further on this subject, but I will add that we may fix the period of which I am speaking as that of an invasion of France, by fashions of Italian prodigality, and sudden and striking effect.

Charles IX. was entertained one day at dinner by a gentleman from the south. Towards the end of the banquet the ceiling suddenly opened, a dense cloud descended, and burst with a noise

like thunder into a hailstorm of sweetmeats, followed by a gentle shower of perfumed water.

We may judge from this instance how childish were the splendid customs of the age, and understand the edicts by which the king vainly endeavoured to curb the folly of his courtiers, who vied with him in magnificent extravagance, and ruined themselves by their efforts to rise to the height of the times, and to shine in galas and private entertainments.

We must begin by stating in a general way that the new fashions for women were immensely popular, and influenced those for men in the highest degree.

Gentlemen adopted an effeminate style of dress, which unfortunately was perpetuated and developed in no small measure by their immediate descendants.

Charles IX., however, openly professed his contempt for extreme attention to dress.

Outside political affairs he cared for nothing but the pleasures of the chase, and locksmith's work, in which he greatly delighted. He could not endure that men should wear busks to their pourpoints, nor dress like Amazons at tournaments; nor would he even tolerate the costly fancy of sending to Italy or the East for silks, ostrich feathers, perfumes, and cosmetics.

In the very first year of his reign, on April 22, 1561, he drew up an edict at Fontainebleau, from which we extract the following passages:—

“ We forbid our subjects, whether men, women, or children, to use on their clothes, whether silken or not, any bands of embroidery, stitching or pipings of silk, gimp, &c., with which their garments, or part thereof, might be covered and embellished, excepting only a bordering of velvet or silk of the width of a finger, or at the utmost two borderings, chain-stitchings or back-stitchings at the edge of their garments. . . .

“ We permit ladies and damsels of birth, who dwell in the country and outside our towns, to wear gowns and cottés of silk stuff of any colour, according to their estate and rank, provided always, they shall be without ornamentation. And as for those

who belong to the suite of our said sister, or other princesses and ladies, they may wear the clothes they now have, in whatever silk or manner they may be embellished, . . . and only when they are in our suite, and not elsewhere. We allow widows the use of all silken stuffs, except serge and silk camlet, taffety, damask, satin, and plain velvet. As to those of birth living in the country and outside our towns, without any kind of embellishment, nor other bordering than that which is put to fasten the stitches. . . . Nor shall women of whatever sort wear gold on their heads, unless during the first year of their marriage, &c."

Such a king as that would, methinks, find much cause for prohibitory edicts at the present day! What a fidgetty kill-joy! What a despiser of fine clothes!

Charles IX. issued four edicts on the same subject. On January 17 and 18, 1563, he forbade vertugadins of more than a yard and a half in width, gold chains, gold work whether with or without enamel, plaques, and all other buttons for ornamenting head-dresses; and in 1567 he regulated the dress of all classes, permitting silks only to princesses and duchesses, prohibiting velvet, and allowing bourgeois to wear pearls and gold in their rosaries and bracelets only. The above edicts are to be found in great awkward folio volumes, amid dry judicial regulations. They form part of a mass of materials for the historian of the manners and customs of France.

Do my fair readers imagine these sumptuary laws were obeyed? Do they not feel that many women would prefer paying fines to the mortification of not dressing according to their inclination? I leave them to decide the question, and I proceed to describe feminine attire in the reign of a prince who ventured to say to Fashion, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther."

What an extraordinary ruler was Charles IX.! He offered battle to Fashion, a more absolute sovereign than himself!—to Fashion, whose cause was that of millions of women! Moreover, he infringed his own laws, by giving permission to the ladies of Toulouse, in 1565, to wear "vertugales."

Fashion gained the victory. Gowns with high collars were

retained, and pleased the Huguenot ladies without being distasteful to the Catholics; while gold and silver were diversified in a hundred ways on various dress-stuffs, or brocaded, or mixed with lace, or twisted, or placed in bars or stripes on silk or velvet. The prohibitions were simply ignored.

Women of high rank wore head-tires of black velvet, or "es-coffions"—coifs of plaited gold or silk ribbons, often ornamented with jewellery. They wore masks, and held them in their hands.

Bourgeoises, whose means did not allow them to run the risk of a fine, contented themselves with cloth hoods, abstained from silk, and carried no mask; but their cottés, cotillons, and gowns might be shaped according to their pleasure, and were consequently the same in form as the garments of noble ladies. Almost every bourgeoisie made use of cloth stuffs or camlets, and of black muffs, for only ladies of rank might use those of various colours.

For a certain length of time, widows wore veils out of doors, high gowns, a camisole, and a turned down collerette without lace. When in mourning for a father, a mother, or a husband, long sleeves were worn, bordered with white fur or swans'-down. No jewels, of course, nor trimmings of jet or steel. For two years the hair was concealed. On becoming widows, even queens were bound to remain in seclusion for forty days. The historian De Thou accuses Catherine de Médicis of having set aside this obligation.

Unmarried daughters walked behind their mothers in the streets, followed by their servants. When journeying into the country, they rode on a pillion behind a man-servant.

The hair of married women was sometimes worn flowing loosely on their shoulders, confined on the brow by a pearl coronet.

The wedding-gown of a girl of the people was generally of cloth, with bands of black velvet, and open sleeves, hanging to the ground and lined with velvet; that of young ladies of rank depended on the taste of the wearer, whose thousand and one caprices were amenable to no law. Nor would those high-born brides have wanted for protectors of their own sex, had they infringed any of the edicts.

It is to a Venetian ambassador, an observer of French fashions towards the time of Charles the Ninth's death, that we are indebted for the above interesting details. He adds: "French women have inconceivably slender waists; they swell out their gowns from the waists downwards by stiffened stuffs and vertugadins, the which increases the elegance of their figure. They are very fanciful about their shoes, whether low slippers or escarpins. The cotillon (underskirt), which in Venice we call *carpetta*, is always very handsome and elegant, whether worn by a bourgeoisie or a lady. As for the upper dress, provided it is made of serge or 'escot,' little attention is paid to it, because the women, when they go to church, kneel and even sit on it. Over the chemise they wear a buste or bodice, that they call a 'corps piqué,' to give them support; it is fastened behind, which is good for the chest. The shoulders are covered with the finest tissue or network; the head, neck, and arms are adorned with jewels. The hair is arranged quite differently from the Italian fashion; they use circlets of wire and 'tampons,' over which the hair is drawn in order to give greater width to the forehead. For the most part their hair is black, which contrasts with their pale complexions; for in France, pallor, if not from ill-health, is considered a beauty."

Our Venetian performs his task admirably. There is nothing omitted from his description of the French ladies of the time; he is gallant, too, in the highest degree. He moved in the best society, among the fine ladies of the town and court.

The "corps piqué" mentioned by him was much like the corset or stays of the present day, and tightly compressed the waist of women who were determined, at any cost, to be slender; and all the more determined that the men, as we have said before, vied with them in slenderness of waist. They compressed their waists in an incredible and unbecoming manner, quite unworthy of their sex.

On the other hand, women took more than ever to wearing the masculine "caleçon," a special kind of pourpoint made with hose.

We have already mentioned masks; we must now treat of paint,

which was introduced into France, it is said, by Catherine de Médicis.

Many of the court beauties coloured their cheeks in the evening with sublimate, rendering it necessary to counteract its corrosive effects the next morning. They used both pomades and cooling lotions for the face. Perfumers manufactured their cosmetics for the toilet, by pulverizing and blending together the claws and wings of pigeons, Venetian turpentine, lilies, fresh eggs, honey, shells called "porcelaines," ground mother-o'-pearl, and camphor. All these ingredients were distilled with a small quantity of musk and ambergris.

What a mixture! it is like an invention of Mephistopheles. I am not aware whether perfumers of the present day compound such prescriptions, but I do know that to my mind ladies have resumed the custom of painting the face more than is desirable. But to proceed.

Jean de Caures, a writer of the sixteenth century, says that the ladies of his time, when masked, wore a mirror on the breast, and that the fashion was becoming general; "so that in course of time," he adds, "there will be neither bourgeoisie nor serving-maid without one."

This curious fashion did not last long; that of wearing mirrors at the girdle, in order that women might see whether their head-dress was in order, was of longer duration. The mirrors in question were round, with a more or less handsome handle, by which they were hung alongside the aumonière.

Catherine de Médicis, whose shoulders were remarkable for beauty, had her dresses cut as low in the bosom as at the back. Her court imitated her, and many ill-made women dared not dress otherwise than their sovereign, to whom also is to be attributed the spread of the fashion of whaleboned bodices, so fraught with evil to numberless generations of women. Opposition does not exist among good courtiers.

"Catherine de Médicis," says Brantôme, "was the first who rode on a side-saddle."

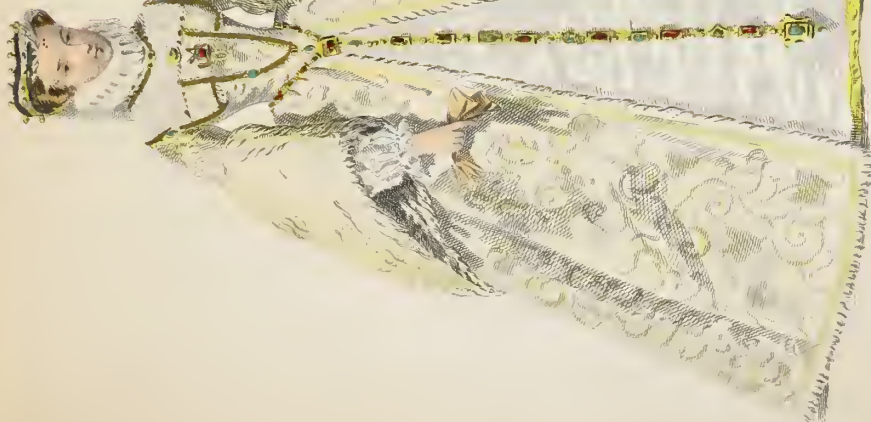
Court dresses were made with immense trains; at balls these

were held up by a metal clasp or ivory button. Notwithstanding their weight, lined as they were with ermine or miniver, no lady would appear without one, even at the risk of suffocation.

Let us, however, do justice to the women of the time of Charles IX., and while criticizing certain details of their attire, admit that it was of enchanting grace, and extremely harmonious in design.

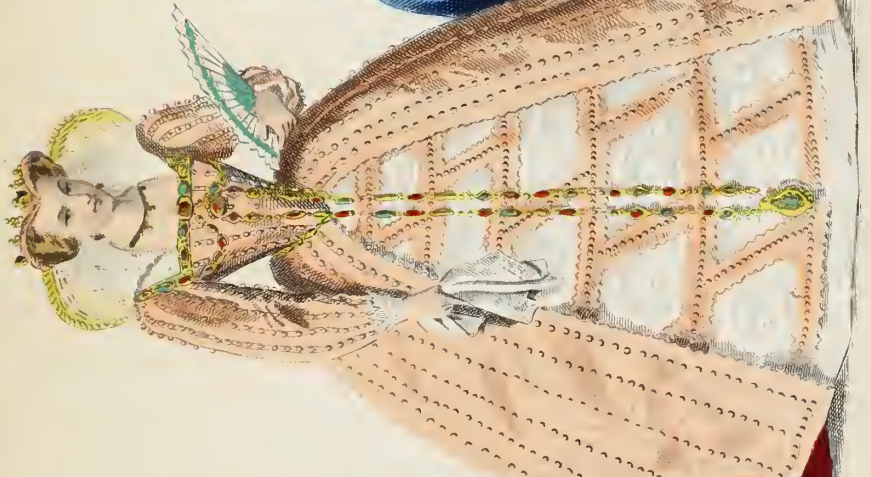
Can there be any costume in better taste than one in white brocade? What can be more elegant than borderings in coloured stones or glass beads? Then there was the fur mantle that a fine lady threw over her shoulders, when a cool air made her tremble for her delicate health; and the white kid gloves, so common now, so rare at that time, and the lace ruffs; and those pretty white hoods, whence fell a long white veil half concealing the figure, and the "arcelets," or wire circlets, by which the hair was raised from the temples. And what better finish could there be to a costume of a grave style than those deep red linings, that starched gorgerette, that simple, yet graceful, black hat?





Charles IX

1560 to 1574



Henry III

1574 to 1589



HISTORY OF FASHION

CHAPTER XIII.

REIGN OF HENRI III.

1574 TO 1589.

Opposition to the laws of King Henri III. on dress—The wife of President N——.—How both sexes evaded the edicts—Gowns from Milan—Mixture of masculine and feminine fashions—Rage for perfumes—Recognition of rank is demanded—Costumes worn at Cognac by Marguerite de Valois in presence of the Polish ambassadors, and her costume at Blois—Brantôme's opinion—Pointed bodices, puffed out sleeves, and “bour-relets”—Remarks on hair—Ridiculous dress of men—Poucet, the preacher—Satirical lines on Joyeuse—Witty remark of Pierre de l'Etoile—Starch used by Henri III.—Cushions.

SIMPLICITY seems to have been the motto of Charles IX., as we have seen by the sumptuary laws he issued.

The ideal of his successor Henri III. was, on the contrary, splendour of every kind. His courtiers indulged in the wildest extravagances, in imitation of their sovereign, whose life was passed in continual diversions and magnificent fêtes, and who set the example of extravagance in dress, and yet constantly issued fresh edicts against luxury.

Henri de Valois cannot be said to have preached by example, for his conduct was in flagrant contradiction of his precepts. A strong opposition sprang at once into existence when he issued a sumptuary law forbidding his great nobles to wear garments of gold or silver cloth.

It is told of the queen, that she was, on one occasion, in a linendraper's shop, and seeing a lady dressed with great elegance, she asked, “And who are you?”

The lady, without looking at the speaker, replied that she was the wife of President N——.

“In good truth, Madame la Presidente,” observed the queen, “you are very smart for a woman of your rank.”

“At any rate, I am not smart at your expense,” returned the lady; and then suddenly recognizing the queen, she threw herself at her feet. Louise de Lorraine gently remonstrated with her upon her extravagance; she herself having little taste for dress or display.

Those subjects of the king who felt offended by his edicts did not think proper to visit the city in garments of serge, like Louise de Lorraine; they had recourse to another expedient, and evaded the royal commands by arraying their valets in the splendid clothes forbidden to themselves. The lacqueys of the great nobles were thus attired in heavily embroidered liveries of silk. Every one, on seeing a servant with all the seams of his coat embroidered in gold, conceived a high idea of the noble personage his master, and of that master’s wealth. Liveries served as an advertisement of nobility and a demonstration of pride.

Women, however, acted on a different plan. Far from dressing up their maids in pearls and diamonds, a proceeding by which they might have created rivals to their own beauty, they discovered another way of evading the law. They had recourse to subterfuge.

Since brocades were forbidden, they sent to Milan for gowns which, without a thread of gold or silver in them, cost, generally speaking, 500 crowns each; and the Italian manufacturers gained by all that our own lost.

Five hundred crowns for the material of a dress! This was a round sum. Five hundred more were spent by French ladies on adjuncts and ornaments, on fringes, braidings, twists, and “cannetilles;” and they were delighted with the splendour they had attained without the help of either gold or silver. Their love for the beautiful was satisfied; the Milan gowns were quite equal to brocade!

What right had Henri de Valois, asked the belles of the period, what right had he who “starched his wife’s collars and curled her hair,” according to malicious reports, to show such severity concerning other women’s dress?

Did not he himself wear a velvet hat, with a plume and an

aigrette of diamonds? Surely this head-dress had not a martial air? Had he not an invincible propensity for effeminacy in everything? Had he not deeply studied the contents of the queen's wardrobe? and was he not more learned than all her women on every matter of feminine attire?

And worse than this! Immediately on his return from Poland he eagerly adopted the fashion of paint and violet powder, that women had initiated at the end of the reign of Charles IX. A sort of rivalry sprang up under his auspices between the great nobles, who made him their model, and the ladies of the court. Not satisfied with his plumed cap, identical with the feminine coif or "escoffion," he was perfumed with amber from head to foot. Never had such a thing been known in France.

The Italians at the court of Catherine de Médicis had introduced a refined taste in perfumes. Nicolas de Montau, in his "*Miroir des François*," reproved ladies for "making use of every perfume—cordial, civet, musk, ambergris, and other precious aromatic substances—for perfuming their dresses and linen, nay, their whole bodies." The fashion spread, even among the bourgeois class. Everything was perfumed, garments, hair, gloves, and shoes; cavities were contrived in rings, bracelets, and necklaces to contain scent. Fans, which were used by young dandies in ruffs and ringlets, as well as by ladies, exhaled an unmistakable odour as they were gently fluttered in the breeze. The sexes vied with each other in the use of perfumes. Every lady at the court wore silk knitted gloves and scented gloves; and it has been asserted that the good Jeanne d'Albret, mother of Henri IV., was poisoned by gloves sent from Italy.

The dress of women consisted of a whalebone bodice, very tight to the waist, with large leg-of-mutton sleeves. "When the princesses or duchesses," says Montaigne, "had not whaleboned bodices, they tightened their waists with wooden splints; for, above all, it was necessary to astonish the world by a slender waist." They usually wore two gowns, one over the other, either of the same colour with variegated trimmings, or of different colours.

Flowered garters were worn. The mask or *loup*, worn when

walking, as in the reign of Charles IX., was not attached by strings, but held by a glass button between the teeth. A round mirror, with a handle, hung at the waist, and afforded means of ascertaining the state of the toilet at any moment. This fashion had existed under Charles IX.

The head-tire most usually worn was a toque with or without an aigrette, a "bourrelet," or a small high-crowned hat, of which the material was, as it were, crumpled up.

Many women still wore the old-fashioned hoods; for young unmarried ladies they were made of velvet with long falling lappet at the back, with a high "touret" and ear-pieces, sometimes ornamented with gold, and called "coquilles" (shells). The hoods worn by bourgeois were made of cloth, and with a square "tournette." Difference of rank was still indicated by difference of dress, and was destined so to continue for several centuries to come.

The heart-shaped head-dress of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries again made its appearance, but the heart was now constructed of the hair itself, instead of a piece of stuff as formerly.

Complaints began to be made by great ladies that certain bourgeois were so bold as to wear velvet and gold ornaments. Petitions from the nobles at the États de Blois, 1588, set forth "that the wives of advocates, procureurs and treasurers, bourgeois, and other *ignoble* women should not be allowed to wear velvet hoods."

What would be the feelings of women of the present day, if any one ventured to forbid them any sort of head-dress! Can we picture to ourselves the wives of lawyers or merchants prevented from dressing as they please!

The ideal costume of the reign of Henri III. was realized in the dress worn by Marguerite de Valois at Cognac, on the occasion of her visit to that town at the commencement of her journey through France, and before her marriage with the King of Navarre. She "put on her handsomest and most superb apparel, that she wore at court on occasions of the greatest magnificence." She desired to dazzle the inhabitants of Cognac. "Besides," said she, "extravagance is with me a family failing."

Marguerite was continually promoting fêtes and tournaments, where splendid dress was combined with sparkling wit.

Let us hear what Pierre de Bourdeilles, Abbot and Lord of Brantôme, says on the subject :—

“Marguerite appeared, superbly attired in a gown of cloth of silver and colombine colour ‘à la Boulonnaise,’ with hanging sleeves; a magnificent head-dress and a white veil, neither too large nor too small. All this was accompanied by so sweet and gracious a majesty, that she seemed more like a goddess from heaven than a queen of the earth.

“The queen said to her :—

“‘My child, you look very well!’

“And she answered :—

“‘Madame, here I wear out the gowns I brought with me from court, because when I return thither, I shall not take them with me. I shall take only scissors, and materials, in order to set myself up again in whatever may be the reigning fashion.’

“The queen replied :—

“‘Why do you talk thus? since you know that it is yourself who invents all the pretty fashions we follow; and wherever you may go, the court will copy you, and not you the court.’”

Catherine de Médicis, who always feared that the sceptre of government might be wrested from her, endeavoured by these words to make her daughter desirous only of the sceptre of Fashion.

And in truth whatever Marguerite de Valois wore became at once the rage among her sex.

The charm of her beauty and her still greater charm of manner invested her with supreme rule over all the finery of the great court ladies. On one occasion she would appear in a white satin gown, adorned with tinsel, with a touch of crimson here and there, and a salmon-coloured crape or Roman gauze veil thrown carelessly over her head; on another, her orange and black gown and large veil would elicit general admiration; or she would excite the most ecstatic delight by inventing a perfectly original costume.

On the arrival of the Polish ambassadors who brought the news of the election of the Duke d'Alençon (afterwards Henri III.) to the throne of Poland, and were delegated by the nation to receive the oath of their new king, Marguerite de Valois wore a gown of Spanish crimson velvet richly trimmed with gold, and a toque of the same material adorned with jewels and bright feathers. Thus attired, she looked so divinely beautiful that she had her portrait painted in that costume. Marguerite had resolved not to be outdone by the Polish envoys, who were attired in the semi-Oriental, semi-fantastic style, with great plumes and widespread eagles' wings.

Her abundant hair required no artificial aid. On Easter Day at Blois, at the procession, she wore large pearl stars in her hair, and a gown of cloth of gold of Eastern manufacture, which had been given by the Grand Turk to the French ambassador, who in his turn had presented it to Marguerite. It was so heavily weighted with jewels, that only so strong a woman as she was could have carried the weight of it.

But notwithstanding Brantôme's approbation, Marguerite de Valois is justly accused, by an eminent archæologist, of having degraded rather than improved the fashions of her time. He asserts that her taste was not good.

Marguerite de Valois was certainly mistaken in lengthening the waists of dresses to a preposterous degree; in inventing sleeves puffed out at the top and tight at the wrist; and, finally, in replacing vertugadins by masses of padding on the hips, which made the skirt look like a big drum, and took away all lightness and elegance from the figure.

Marguerite de Valois had magnificent black hair, but, setting little value on this gift of nature, she usually covered it with false hair of a light shade. She is said to have selected fair-haired pages, whose long locks were occasionally shorn for her benefit.

Much the same custom prevails at the present day, the hair-market being supplied by peasant girls.

According to the Gaignières collection in the National Library, which consists of thousands of drawings and engravings, the ladies

at the court of Henri III. wore sleeves of enormous size, the whole dress, bodice, and skirt being of the same material.

Servants of the period wore bodices with busks, and carried keys in the right hand and a basket over the left arm. The costume was grave, and yet not without elegance.

But however full of absurdities were feminine fashions under Henri III., those for men far exceeded them; their whims and eccentricities were unbounded.

The enormous starched collars that rose from a fine lady's shoulders, and made a sort of hollow niche behind her head, could not long retain their freshness, however carefully worn, and the padded "busts," somewhat like a piece of armour, must have greatly impeded all natural movement; while the goffered ruff, separating the head from the shoulders, was far from graceful, notwithstanding the "bichous," or rolls of hair, on the temples. All these constituted an affected and ungraceful costume, and the wearers were called "poupins" by the ill-natured wits of the time.

The courtiers and favourites of Henri III. imitated the court ladies, not only by wearing pearl necklaces, earrings, and rings of gold, silver, precious stones, enamel, &c., but also wore their "bourets" of velvet, and their "bichons" or rolled hair. They were "fraisés et frisés," that is, they wore both ruffs and curls. Their pourpoints were open, so as to display the point lace, at that time recently imported from Venice. The fans of these "curled darlings" were also ornamented with lace; and at night they wore masks and gloves saturated with various cosmetics and unguents to preserve the whiteness of their skin.

The dress worn by the Duc de Joyeuse, the favourite of Henri III., on the occasion of his marriage with the queen's sister, is worthy of note. The event made a great sensation in the high and perfumed circles of the day. The king gave fêtes, which cost at least 200,000 crowns, and this at a time when France was impoverished by civil war.

Maurice Poucet, a famous preacher, protested from the pulpit against such profuse expenditure; and the Duc de Joyeuse, meeting him on one occasion, exclaimed with indignation, "I have

often heard of you, and how you make the people laugh by your sermons." "It is right that I should make them laugh," the preacher coldly replied; "since you make them weep over the subsidies and great expenses of your wedding."

Joyeuse withdrew without daring to strike Poucet, as he had intended to do.

The king and Joyeuse were dressed precisely alike at the wedding of the latter. They were covered with embroidery, pearls, and precious stones. Like the court ladies, they were scented with cordial water, civet, musk, ambergris, and aromatic substances; their ruffs were starched and goffered. They carried off the palm from the "poupins."

Following their example, the dandies of the time not only adopted the Italian turn-over collars, but attired themselves in such a fashion as to attract the bitterest satire. The following lines were aimed at Joyeuse and his imitators:—

"Ce petit popeliret,
Frisé, fraisé, blondelet,
Dont la reluisante face
Fait même honte à la glace,
Et la délicate peau
Au plus beau teint d'un tableau;
Ce muguet dont la parole
Est blèze, mignarde et molle;
Le pied duquel, en marchant,
N'iroit un œuf escachant,
L'autre jour prit fantaisie
De s'épouser à Marie,
Vêtue aussi proprement,
Peu s'en faut, que son (galant).
Et, venant devant le temple,
Le prêtre, qui les contemple,
Demande, facétieux:
'Quel est l'époux de vous deux?'"¹

¹ "That little popinjay,
Curled, ruffed, and milk-skinned,
Whose shining face
Puts even his mirror to shame,
And his delicate skin
Outdoes the tints of a picture;

The starched ruffs, or fluted collars, at first so fashionable at the court of Henri III., and then capriciously discarded, made their appearance once more, extraordinarily improved, for the king's own wear. This was in 1578. The king appeared wearing a ruff made of fifteen breadths of cambric, and half a yard in depth. "To see his head against that ruff," said Pierre de l'Estoile, "put one in the mind of St. John the Baptist's head on a charger."

But the king's triumph was complete; and his favourites were equal to the occasion, and expressed rapturous admiration of his good taste.

Being a true amateur in the matter of fluted collars, he had judged that ordinary starch would not suffice to hold up such a quantity of material as stiffly as was necessary, and the king of France had deigned to invent a sublime mixture; his august hands had obtained a satisfactory result from rice flour, and he had duly experimented upon it!

From the combination of the masculine and feminine styles, dress in general had assumed an ungraceful stiffness. The attire of Henri III. was considered monstrous by the serious minds of the time. D'Aubigné exclaimed:

"Si, qu'au premier abord, chacun estoit en peine
S'il voyoit un roi-femme ou bien un homme-reine."²

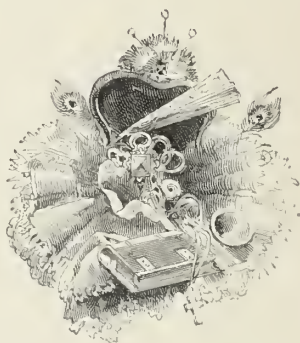
The ladies of the court, fortunately, were not such thorough

That coxcomb whose mode of speech
Is mincing, soft, and lisping,
And whose foot when he walks
Would not crack an eggshell,
Took a fancy, the other day,
To marry Marie.
She was dressed almost as gaily
As her gallant.
And when they came to church,
The priest, looking at them,
Asked, jestingly:
'Which of you two is the husband?'

² "So that at a first glance, each comer was at a loss
To know whether he beheld a king-woman or a man-queen."

courtiers as to overpass all the bounds of decorum. They adopted the fashion of cushions, which remaining fixed behind, while the hoop swayed, gave size and roundness to the hips, but they did not imitate the king's gentlemen in wearing the "panse," or paunch, an absurd invention, which gave the male wearer a likeness to Punch, and was the exact opposite of the "buste ajusté." The "buste" flattened the figure, while the "panse," consisting of a quantity of cotton wool, formed an enormous Pantagruelian stomach, and imparted a truly grotesque appearance to those who wore it. This absurd fashion was of short duration; men found it cumbrous, and perhaps became ashamed of the ridicule it excited.

If my fair readers will look at a painting at the Louvre, by Clouet, otherwise Janet, *circa* 1584, they will feel flattered; for they will perceive that the palm of absurdity and singularity belonged of right at that time to the sterner sex.





Louis XIII
1644

HISTORY OF FASHION

Henry IV
1600

Antiquary and Paris

CHAPTER XIV.

REIGNS OF HENRI IV. AND LOUIS XIII.

1589 TO 1643.

Universal mourning on the death of the Guises ; intolerance of showy dress—Vertugadins, “*espoirement*,” “*corps espagnolé*”—Diversity of colours—The pearls, jewels, and diamonds belonging to Gabrielle d’Estrées and to the queen—Dress of Marguerite de France—Low-cut bodices—Head-dresses of hair—Various styles—Venetian slippers—Edicts of Louis XII.—Caricatures : “*Pompe funèbre de la Mode*”—Words and fashions—Ribbons or “*galants*”—Dress of widows—“*Demi-ceint*” girdles—Gloves of all sorts—Patches—Masks ; their use—“*Cache-laid*”—The *Frondeuses*—Mme. de Longueville.

THERE is no difficulty in ascertaining the relation between the events of a certain period and the fashions of the same date.

It may be that if the spirit of the age be serious, if the social community be exposed to severe trials, if continual misfortunes befall the mass of the people, the mode of dress will reflect those vicissitudes of the time ; and, generally speaking, such is the case. Sometimes, on the contrary, extravagance and luxury seem to be flaunted in the very face of the general poverty, and the small prosperous minority are so profoundly indifferent to the misfortunes of the greater part of mankind, that they make not the slightest change in their mode of living, but indulge in every whim and caprice, and continue to bend the knee before the “fickle goddess.”

A remarkable exception to this rule is worthy of note. It occurred in Paris in December, 1583, immediately after the murder of the Duc de Guise at the *États de Blois*. Deep mourning prevailed among the “leaguers” of the capital, and numerous expiatory or funereal processions took place. No fashionable costume was tolerated. “If a *demoiselle* was seen wearing a *ruff* ‘à la confusion,’ nay, even a single ‘*rabat*’ of extra length, or

sleeves too open, or any other superfluous adornment, the people would attack her, drag off her ruff, and even tear her clothes."

But this, we repeat, was an exception. In the most troubled times of our history, fashion and luxury appear to have yielded none of their rights. Frenchmen, and still more Frenchwomen, feel so imperious a need of pleasure! Ennui comes to them so readily! The love of admiration, or to speak more accurately, the love of elegance and of change is so deeply rooted in the national character. If luxury did not exist in France, we should be compelled to invent it. When it vanishes, we think that all is lost—even our country!

It is unnecessary to recall the events of the reign of Henri IV., which began in civil war, and ended with his assassination. The hero of the day, the conqueror at Ivry, the king who "confounded both Mayenne and Iberia," loved fêtes as much perhaps as battles, for in both he was triumphant over all rivals.

His court followed his example. Men still wore the curls and ringlets of preceding reigns; ladies continued to use masks, so conducive to tricks and adventures of all kinds. Nor did they give up their perfumes, whether ambergris, musk, or cordial water; moreover they astonished the world by the size of their "vertugadins."

The vertugadin consisted of circles of iron, wood, or whalebone, "resembling the hoops of casks." These were sewn inside the skirts. It dated from the first half of the sixteenth century, but attained no extraordinary size under the Valois. Many eccentricities may be laid to their charge, as we have seen, but on this point they were tolerably reasonable.

From the first appearance of the vertugadin, which has become a type in the history of Fashion, splints of wood were employed to compress the waist, and give it slenderness and grace. Busks, whalebone bodices, and corsets were used later. The object was to render the waist smaller; hence resulted a whole architectural system intended to compass the result at which our own contemporaries sometimes aim by means of the corset. The waist was

so tightly compressed that Henri Estienne speaks of "l'espoitrine-ment des dames."

The vertugadin came to us direct from Spain. "In order to obtain a real Spanish figure," says Montaigne, "what a gehenna of suffering will not women endure, drawn in and compressed by great 'coches' entering the very flesh; nay, sometimes they even die thereof?"

During the reign of Henri IV. the gigantic size of the vertugadin, in spite of satire and sarcasm, was not lessened by one inch. In vain was its absurdity manifest. The ladies nearly all looked "like church bells," to make use of a metaphor for which other historians are responsible. Their bodices were usually buttoned in front, and were cut square at the waist; but they often wore long pointed bodices partially opened in front, and disclosing a white chemisette elegantly trimmed with embroidery or lace. Lace was lavished on every part of the gown—on the wrists, sleeves, and back.

Frenchwomen wore colours, and great was their number—from "rat-colour" to that called "widow's joy," or "envenomed monkey," or "chimney-sweep," according to D'Aubigné.

Gabrielle d'Estrées, who wore her hair frizzed and drawn back in the shape of a heart, had a "cotillon" of the colour of "gold-dust of Turkey." Her black satin gown, slashed with white, is mentioned by some writers. She paid 1900 crowns for the embroidered handkerchief she carried at a ballet. Some court ladies loaded themselves with such a weight of pearls and jewels that they were unable to move. At the baptism of the king's children, on September 14, 1606, the queen's gown, covered with "thirty-two thousand pearls and three thousand diamonds, was beyond rivalry, and priceless." Before that, in 1594, Gabrielle d'Estrées "was so loaded with pearls and sparkling gems that she outshone the light of the torches." She possessed a "cotte of Turkish cloth of gold, with flowers embroidered in carnation, white, and green," and a "gown of flowered green velvet, lined with cloth of silver, and trimmed with gold and silver braid, and pipings of carnation satin."

The display of diamonds was destined to increase as time went on.

The reign of the *vertugadin*, which Mme. de Motteville described as "a round and monstrous machine," came to an end in 1630. But red silk stockings, called "*bas de flammette*," costing more than seventy-five francs a pair, shoes with flaps fastened by a love-knot "*à la Choisy*" in blue or red satin, and crimson velvet, pattens with high cork soles, survived the *vertugadin*, as did likewise velvet, miniver, and ermine muffs in winter.

Marguerite de France, the daughter of Henri II. and wife of Henri IV., is depicted wearing the following costume: Pearl necklace and earrings, open-work fan, kid gloves completely covering the hands and wrists, where they were drawn under white cuffs, a cap, since known as the Marie Stuart cap, her hair frizzed and drawn up symmetrically over the forehead, an under-dress of black satin, the upper one trimmed with gimp, an open fluted collar, and an immense ruff reaching to the nape of the neck.

Marguerite de France, whom courtiers called "the goddess," was extraordinarily beautiful, and was graceful, lively, and fascinating in the highest degree. Her "*carrures*" (shoulder-breadths) and skirts were made by her orders, it is said, much wider than was necessary. She was enormously stout, and by way of improving her figure applied steel bands to each side of her waist. There were, it seems, not a few doors through which the fair princess could not pass.

Gowns were made not only of satin but of velvet, damask, and silk of every colour. There were dresses "*à collets débordés*," or with collars falling over the shoulders and upper part of the arm; there were ruffs "*à grands godrons*," so cut out and open-worked that the skin was easily discernible behind them; there were belts of exorbitant price, to which were suspended needle-cases, gold-handled scissors, and gold-braided velvet purses.

By degrees, through the fatal effect of bad example, the passion for low-cut bodices assumed a boundless sway.

Innocent XI., who was at enmity with France, rebuked this craze from the chair of St. Peter, and showed no greater favour

to the weaker sex than to the politicians of France. He issued a bull by which he "enjoined on all women, married and single, to cover their bosoms, shoulders, and arms down to the wrist, with non-transparent materials, on pain of excommunication."

But the thunderbolts of the Church were hurled in vain, and light, transparent, and low-cut gowns enjoyed a long career. The Vatican and the French Parliament might speak if they chose, but they could not prevail against the customs of the day.

Dating from the year 1587, one of the last years of the troubled reign of Henri III., women had taken a violent fancy to wearing hair only as a head-dress, surmounted by a feather. They wore false hair or wigs powdered with violet powder for brunettes, and with iris for fair women. A sort of gum or mucilage kept the hair in its place; their heads seemed to be pasted. The women of the people made use of the dust of rotten oak, and the peasants of flour for the same purpose.

There were four different styles of head-dresses of the period:—First, the "*coiffure à boucles frisées*," or curled ringlets, the style of which is sufficiently indicated by its name; secondly, that "*à passe fillons*;" thirdly, that "*à oreillettes*," a hat with a high crown, the material of which being crumpled of itself (*naturellement chiffonnée*) fell into a quantity of little folds; and, fourthly, the "*coiffure à l'espagnole*," or Spanish head-dress.

The latter deserves some notice on account of its elegance and singularity. My readers can imagine the effect of a handsome Spanish toque, embroidered or braided in gold, and artistically placed at the back of the head, with the hair in curls all round the front. In addition, there were several plaits intermingled with ribbons and jewels, which fell lightly on the neck and floated in the wind. This head-dress met with little or no opposition.

Transparent dresses "*à l'ange*," or "*à la vierge*," skirts of yellow satin, like those of Francion's wife, and light head-dresses, were worn with very delicate and fanciful shoes. Venetian slippers were much prized, also coloured shoes with high heels.

During the reign of Henri IV., Venetian and Florentine lace became so fashionable in France, that, in justice to native manu-

facturers, their importation was forbidden. But a system of fraudulent traffic was set up, and French vanity almost got the better of the law. The king chose to banter his minister on the extravagance of women, and Sully immediately took certain steps which succeeded in temporarily stopping the excess of expenditure on dress.

Louis XIII., the son of Henri III., endeavoured to walk in the path traced out by Sully, and in 1633 and 1634 he issued two fresh edicts lecturing Frenchwomen on their caprices. All the women instantly cried "Shame!" and numberless caricatures were published in defence of their cause.

One artist depicted a steady tradesman of Flanders, reduced to a state of despair, tearing his hair, and wildly cursing things in general, while he tramples his embroideries under foot and exclaims:—

"Que fait-on publier? que venons-nous d'entendre?
Mettons bas la boutique, et de nos passements
Faisons des cordes pour nous pendre!"¹

Another print bore the following title: "Pompe funèbre de la Mode, avec les larmes de Démocrite et les ris d'Héraclite." Four women are leading Fashion along, followed by a crowd of work-women, barbers, embroiderers, and tailors, who are endeavouring to make the best of their evil fortune, and brandishing, after the fashion of banners, wands laden with lace and finery. In the background is a sarcophagus bearing the following epitaph:—

"Ci-gist sous ce tableau, pour l'avoir mérité,
La Mode, qui causait tant de folie en France.
La mort a fait mourir la superfluité,
Et va faire bientôt revivre l'abondance."²

¹ "What is it that is published? what do we hear?
Let us shut up shop, and of our goods make ropes
To hang ourselves withal."

² "Here lies under this picture, for having deserved it,
Fashion, which caused so much madness in France.
Death has put superfluity to death,
And will soon revive abundance."

Here lieth Fashion ! The ladies of the day must have laughed heartily in their sleeve at the notion of the death of Fashion ; for how should they admit that it *deserved* to die ? In spite of caricatures it did, in fact, survive, and in face of all the edicts took refuge at court, as its privileged sanctuary, and the natural home of ermine, gold-laced coats, lace, and jewels.

Vaugelas, the grammarian, paid tribute to the power of Fashion, when he said : “ Words are like fashions. The wise, who know that they must speak and dress like every one else, do not immediately adopt the newest inventions of folly, but only those in general use, and it is equally unreasonable to endeavour to make words or to make fashions, or to refuse to abide by them after they have been publicly recognized.” In other words, custom overrides everything as regards both language and dress, and no one can decree innovations either in speech or in costume, with a chance of being obeyed.

Nor did the Jansenists meet with better success when they attempted to deprive a certain lady of Easter Communion because she had trimmed her pocket-handkerchief with lace. Was it not the fashion ?

Meanwhile the mere bourgeois, who dared not openly defy the sumptuary laws, wore, in place of the lace forbidden them, a quantity of ribbon under the generic name of “ galants.”

Knots of ribbon appeared on the dresses of all the bourgeois, and even on those of the maid-servants of Molière’s and Corneille’s time. There were tufts of ribbon on the skirts, bodices, sleeves, and hair. Bourgeois felt the necessity of wearing ribbons at a time when cavaliers were profusely adorned with them. The whole French people were ribbon mad.

The “ chaperon ” or hood was still worn by bourgeois. This was a small coif pointed on the forehead, and with an appendage behind that hung over the shoulders. The point was fastened down by pins. If we may believe the author of “ *La Chasse au Vieil Grognaud*,” “ nobody was so well dressed, so clean, and so respectable ” as the bourgeois. “ So well mannered, and so agreeable in their speech and conversation, that for the most part

they with their daughters would be taken for noble ladies rather than for bourgeois and shopkeepers."

Great ladies also condescended to wear hoods, but only in winter.

According to *Ménage*, Anne of Austria introduced the fashion of "garcettes," which took the place of the padded wigs. The hair was frequently dressed "en tire-bouchons," or corkscrew-fashion, and in loops, with a "culbute" or ribbon-bow fixed in the chignon.

Widows were never seen without a little coif on their heads. After two years' deep mourning in "guimpe" and mantle, says a modern writer, widows were restricted for the rest of their lives, unless they married again, to black and white made in the simplest manner. *Mme. d'Aiguillon*, the niece of Cardinal Richelieu, was the first who ventured to wear colours after her husband's death. Yet she did not throw aside the hood, which remained in existence under different names—sometimes "languette," sometimes "bandeau"—until the close of the seventeenth century.

According to *St. Simon*, *Mme. de Navailles*, who died in 1700, was the last widow who wore a "bandeau."

For undress, great ladies wore small coifs or round caps, fitting close to the head. Servants and women of the people added a kind of flag, which hung down between the shoulders, and was called a "bavolette," and was probably the forerunner of the "bavolet," or bonnet-curtain of our own times. Countrywomen wore instead of a coif a thick stitched "béguin," which is still in use in certain country places. In Picardy it is called a "cale" or "calipète."

Women of the people wore no gowns, only two petticoats and a bodice; the latter was sometimes laid aside for a "hongreline," or loose bodice with deep basques, and in all cases an apron. They almost all possessed gold ornaments.

The girdle consisted of a "demi-ceint" of silver, and a broad band of silk ornamented with chased or enamelled gold-work. The "demi-ceint" was sometimes worth forty crowns; knives, keys, scissors, &c., were suspended to it by a chain. Taken altogether, the dress of a maid-servant was rather complicated.

Feminine attire altered very little under Louis XIII. We may note, however, the muff and the little "muff-dog," seldom separated from his mistress.

Essences were still used, also white lead and vermillion. Every article of dress was scented, including shoes, and especially gloves. There were gloves "à l'occasion," "à la nécessité," "à la cadenet," "à la Phyllis," "à la Frangipani" made out of highly perfumed skins, and gloves "à la Néroli," so called from a princess of that name who had, it seems, invented an exquisite scent.

In the "Discours de la Mode" (1615) we read:—

"Une dame ne peut jamais estre prisee
Si sa perruque n'est mignonement frisée,
Si elle n'a son chef de poudre parfumé
Et un millier de noeuds, qui çà qui là semé,
Par quatre, cinq ou six rangs, ou bien davantage,
Comme sa chevelure, a plus ou moins d'étagé."³

For the benefit of their complexions, women applied lard to their faces at night.

The "précieuses," whom Molière thought ridiculous, and who refined our language until they got out of their depth, used to call fans "zephyrs." This is rather an appropriate expression, and at any rate it is less affected than the euphemism of "baptized mules," by which they designated the porters of their sedan chairs.

Bright coloured silk stockings were still in fashion, and red satin shoes, or little slippers of various hues.

We must call attention to one novelty, the appearance of patches, which are first mentioned in print in 1655, and continued to be in fashion until the time of the Regency, when seven principal patches were recognized.

A patch was simply a small bit of black silk sticking-plaister,

³ "A lady can never be admired
If her wig be not trimly curled,
If she wears not perfumed powder in her hair,
And a multitude of knots, pinned here and there
By four, five, or six, or many more,
As in her head-dress pleasantly dispersed."

placed on the face, which looked all the fairer for the contrast. Each lady placed the patch to suit the expression of her countenance. In the midst of a promenade or street a great lady might be seen suddenly to stop, to open the patch-box she carried everywhere with her, to survey herself in the mirror which lined its lid, and quickly to replace a patch that had fallen off. The fashion of patches was not, as might be imagined, a production of the seventeenth century. It was a reminiscence of early Roman times, during which even orators wore patches when speaking from the Tribune. We may truly say that there is nothing new under the sun.

It is said that certain plaisters ordered as a remedy for headache had originally suggested these black spots, and what had been at first prescribed for health's sake, was retained as an aid and accessory to the beauty of ladies who wished for artificial attractions.

After endeavouring to animate and improve the countenance by patches, the next step was to conceal those faces to which nature had been unkind behind a mask ; or else to envelope beauty in mystery, by making its presence doubtful, and exciting the curiosity of the incredulous.

Masks originated in the reign of Henri II. They reappeared in tenfold force under Louis XIII. Ladies avoided recognition by wearing black velvet masks, lined with white satin, that folded in two like a pocket-book. There were no strings with which to fix them on, but a slender silver bar ending in a button was fastened on the inside, and putting this between her teeth, the wearer could hold her mask in its place. Moreover, the tone of the voice was so altered by a mask, that many persons, anxious to avoid satirical remark, kept on their masks in public promenades, at balls, and even in church.

The poet Scarron describes the prettiest kind of mask in his "Épître Burlesque" to Mme. de Hautefort :—

" Parlerai-je de ces fantasques
Qui portent dentelle à leurs masques,
En chamarrant les trous des yeux,
Croyant que le masque est au mieux ?

Dirai-je qu'en la canicule,
 Qu'à la cave même l'on brûle,
 Elles portent panne et velours ?
 Mais ce n'est pas à tous les jours ;
 Qu'au lieu de mouches les coquettes
 Couvrent leur museau de paillettes,
 Ont en bouche cannelle et clous,
 Afin d'avoir le flaire doux,
 Ou du fenouil que je ne mente,
 Ou herbe forte comme mente." ¹

Masks called "loups" were supposed to protect the complexion from sunburn, but this was a mere pretext ; the real object was to conceal the face of the wearer. Some ladies thus concealed their plainness, and the loup was also called "cache-laid," or hide-ugly.

After the death of Louis XIII., when the minority of Louis XIV. afforded an excuse for the troubles of the Fronde, when the great ladies meddled with politics, directed insurrectionary movements, and acquired the name of "belles frondeuses," masks played a most important part.

Conspiracies that had been hatched in boudoirs broke out in the streets, and women took up arms and placed themselves at the head of seditious parties. Cardinal Mazarin used to say : "There are three women in France capable of governing or of upsetting three kingdoms : the Duchesse de Longueville, the Princesse Palatine, and the Duchesse de Chevreuse."

These ladies used to go, masked, to the councils of Beaufort or

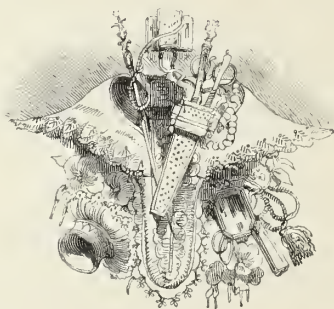
"Shall I tell of those fanciful creatures
 Who wear lace on their masks,
 And bedecking the eye-holes
 Think the mask is perfect ?
 Shall I say that in the dog-days,
 When one burns even in the cellar,
 They wear gold cloth and velvet ?
 But it is not every day
 That in place of patches our coquettes
 Cover their chins with spangles,
 And chew ginger and cloves,
 That they may smell sweetly,
 Or fennel—I lie not—
 Or a strong herb like mint."

of Condé, so as to escape the observation of the enemies of their cause.

There are portraits in existence of that arch-Frondeuse the Duchesse de Longueville. She is represented with helmet and cuirass; her air and attitude are those of a heroine. Several princesses took her for their model; and the period is one of note as regards fashion, especially for great diversity in dress.

No commands were laid on great lords and ladies in those times of anarchy among the nobles. There was ample liberty, not to say licence, in dress.

“The women,” says a contemporary writer, “shone in jewels at a ball given by Anne of Austria, and as much as they could in beauty also; and others in embroidery, feathers, ribbons, and good looks, each according to her means and the gifts of nature.” But for them liberty in dress was not destined to be of long duration.



CHAPTER XV.

REIGN OF LOUIS XIV.

1643 TO 1705.

Louis XIV. commands—Court luxury and pleasure ; disguises—The Temple jewellery—Fashion and etiquette—Successive fashions—Royal edicts—The “Tombeau du sens commun”—Dress of La Vallière—Of Mme. de Montespan—Costume of a lady of rank in 1668—The “échelles de Mme. de la Reynie”—“Transparencies”—Manufactures—Champagne, the hair-dresser—Female hair-dressers—“Hurluberlus” and Mme. de Sévigné—Moustaches for women ; patches—Palatines—Slippers ; high heels—Corsets ; fans ; sweet lemons—Dog-muffs—Hair dressed “à la Fontanges”—English style of dressing hair—“Esther”—Steinkerks—“Crémonas”—“Amadis” and Jansenist sleeves—Hair dressed “à l’effrontée”—Dresses of the Duchesse de Bourgogne—Mignardises.

A KING who knows how to command now appears upon the scene. In his youth Louis XIV. ruled over pleasure, in his old age over conscience.

But whether in youth, middle age, or at the close of life, Louis XIV. could not dispense with a numerous company of courtiers of both sexes, whom he attracted by means of fêtes and fashion, by continual amusements, and by pleasures of every kind.

In 1650, Mme. Belot, the wife of a “Maître des requêtes,” first wore and set the fashion of the “justaucorps,” which was like the “hongrelaine” of former years, but shaped in some respects like a man’s pourpoint. As a riding or hunting costume it was also adopted by the bourgeois.

Scarfs came again into fashion in 1656. But some disbanded soldiers amused themselves by wandering through the streets of Paris and snatching those light garments from the shoulders of ladies passing by, on the pretext that Louis XIV. had forbidden the wearing of them. A few of these scoundrels were hanged, without ceremony, by the police.

During the Carnival of 1659, “the court,” says Mdle. de Mont-

pensier, "only arrived at the beginning of February. . . . We often masqueraded in most delightful fashion. On one occasion, Monsieur, Mdle. de Villeroy, Mdle. de Gourdon, and I, wore cloth of silver with rose-coloured braid, black velvet aprons, and stomachers trimmed with gold and silver lace. Our dresses were cut like those of the Bresse peasants, with collars and cuffs of yellow cloth in the same style, but of somewhat finer quality than is used by them, and edged with Venetian lace. We had black velvet hats entirely covered with flame-coloured, pink, and white feathers. My bodice was laced up with pearls and fastened with diamonds, and had diamonds all about it. Monsieur and Mdle. de Villeroy also wore diamonds, and Mdle. de Gourdon emeralds. Our black hair was dressed in the Bresse peasant style, and we carried flame-coloured crooks ornamented with silver. For shepherds we had the Duc de Roquelaure, the Comte de Guiche, Péquilain, and the Marquis de Villeroy, &c."

In 1662, "pleasure and plenty were reigning at court; the courtiers lived high and played high. Money was abundant, every purse open, and young men got as much cash as they chose from the notaries. There was a constant succession of feasts, dances, and entertainments."

In 1664, Louis XIV. distributed presents of dress-stuffs to all his courtiers, who were positively no longer free to dress as they liked. After he had built the pavilion at Marly, every court lady found a complete costume, and a quantity of the most exquisite lace, in her wardrobe. And when by special favour the royal princes were allowed to obtain embroidery in blue silk, it was officially reckoned among the "benefits" received from the king.

Materials were magnificent! Gros de Naples was brocaded with gold leaves and red, violet, or gold and silver flowers.

The "Mercure Galant" of the same year contained the following letter on the fashions, addressed to a countess in the country:—

"As I am aware, madame, that your country neighbours are much interested in the new fashions, I paid a visit lately to one of those ladies who can only talk of skirts and finery. . . .

"Dresses painted with figures and flowers are still worn, but

there is more green in the bouquets of flowers. They are beginning to paint the finest linen, and this is quite a novelty, for all those we have seen hitherto were only printed.

“Jet and enamel buttons are mentioned, watered ribbons, and square watches with looking-glass at the back; but this last fashion does not meet with approval, as it is thought the corners of the watch might be dangerous.

“Net-work coifs were at first dotted, and afterwards open worked; this last is quite a novelty, as are also the skirts of ‘point d’Angleterre,’ printed on linen and mounted on silk with raised ornaments; every woman has bought some.”

Jewellery had a large sale: some in coloured glass, manufactured by a clever artisan in the Temple, was called “Temple jewellery.”

Fashion now became a question of etiquette, and Louis XIV. was lawgiver. The court obeyed every fancy of the sovereign, and the town followed suit, as far as was possible, and more than was reasonable. Debts were incurred for dress. A tailor made a claim of 300,000 francs on the great Condé!

Men and women alike endeavoured to shine in dress. “At the royal residences,” says Voltaire, “every lady found a complete suit of clothes in readiness for her. A princess had but to appear in some striking costume, and every lady of rank immediately endeavoured to imitate, even to outshine her. The most extravagant sums were paid for dresses that were continually renewed.” “Scarcely had one fashion usurped the place of another,” says La Bruyère, “when it was succeeded by a third, which in its turn was replaced by some still newer fashion, not by any means the last.” Never had the refinements of Fashion been pushed so far.

The poverty of a great part of the population in the time of the Fronde has been admitted. But Dubosc-Montandré, the author of a pamphlet called “Le Tombeau du Sens Commun,” is of a different opinion, and exclaims in 1650: “If the people were poor, should we see neckerchiefs worth twenty or thirty crowns on the wives of cooks? or liveried lacqueys carrying a cushion behind their mistress, a mere shopkeeper’s wife? Should we see milliners and butchers’ daughters wearing dresses worth 300 or 400 francs?

or gold trimmings brought down so low as to adorn laundresses withal? And is it not true that clothes ought to be infallible tokens by which to distinguish rank and conditions in life, and that in the gardens of the Luxembourg or the Tuileries we ought to have no difficulty in distinguishing a duchess from a bookseller's spouse, a marchioness from a grocer's wife, or a countess from a cook?"

Our author forgets that extravagance does not always indicate general wealth, though it frequently casts suspicion on the moral tone of society.

On the one hand, the king signed edicts against extravagance, while on the other he encouraged it by his splendid fêtes. The bourgeois alone approved of edicts forbidding gold or silver-laced liveries, and fixing a limit to the price of the handsomest materials. The edict of 1700 was followed by the publication of a print, underneath which was the following distich:—

“A femme désolée mari joyeux . . .
Trêve à la bourse du mari jusqu'à nouvelle mode.”¹

A decree of the council, dated August 21, 1665, set forth that no woman, single or married, should be admitted “marchande lingère,” unless she professed the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman faith.

Fifteen years later, a poet wrote the following lines:—

“On ne distingue plus nos dames
D'avecque le commun des femmes :
Dès qu'une personne d'honneur
Prend quelque juppe de couleur,
Ou dès qu'elle change de mode,
Enfin, dès qu'elle s'accommode
Dedans un estat éclatant,
Une bourgeoise en fait autant ;
Elle s'ornera de panaches,
Et s'appliquera des moustaches,
Des postiches, des faux cheveux,
Des tours, des tresses et des nœuds,

¹ “Mourning wife has joyful husband,
And the purse a truce until a new fashion arrives.”

Des coëffes demi-blanche ou jaune,
Où les toiles entrent par aune ;
De ces beaux taffetas rayez,
Qui parfois ne sont pas payez,
Car souvent tant de braverie (coquetterie)
Cache beaucoup de gueuserie.”²

The above satirical and descriptive tirade may, perhaps, have annoyed the belles of the day, but it did not reform them.

Law and criticism were alike in vain, and the history of dress, both masculine and feminine, from the minority of Louis XIV. to the year 1715, presents a variety of phases that reflect the successive changes at his court.

When Marie Thérèse arrived in Paris in August, 1660, she was attired in “a gown enriched with gold, pearls, and precious stones, and was adorned with the most splendid of the crown jewels.”

A year afterwards, at a fête at Vaux, Mdle. de la Vallière wore a white gown, “with gold stars and leaves in Persian stitch, and a pale blue sash tied in a large knot below the bosom. In her fair waving hair, falling in profusion about her neck and shoulders, she wore flowers and pearls mingled together. Two large emeralds shone in her ears.” Her arms were bare, and encircled above the elbow by a gold open-work bracelet set with opals. She wore gloves of cream-coloured Brussels lace.

² “No longer are our ladies to be distinguished
From the women of the people ;
Since a person of honour
Wears a coloured petticoat,
Or changes the fashion of her clothes,
In short, since she dresses herself
In a gaudy manner.
A bourgeoisie does as much as that ;
She too will put on plumes,
And stick on moustaches,
False hair and pads,
‘Tours,’ plaits, and knots ;
White and yellow coifs,
With ells of lawn in them ;
And those fine striped silks
Which are sometimes not paid for ;
For often such bravery of dress
Hides much roguery.”

“Langlée, director of the royal sports,” says Mme. de Sévigné, “gave to Mme. de Montespan a gown of gold upon gold, embroidered in gold, bordered with gold, above which was a band (frise) of gold, worked in gold mixed with a particular kind of gold; and forming the most divine material that can be conceived. . . .”

All women, including the queen-mother, had made use of masks until the year 1663.

This fashion passed away as political adventures gradually ceased. But in 1695 it still prevailed. “With regard to ladies,” says the “*Traité de la Civilité*,” published in Paris, “it is well to know that in addition to the curtsy, they have other means, such as the mask, the coif, and the gown, with which they can express respect; for it is reckoned uncivil for a lady to enter the room of a person deserving of consideration with dress tucked up, face masked, and coif on head, unless the coif be transparent. It is an incivility also to keep on her mask in any place where a person of eminent rank is present, by whom she might be perceived, except when in a coach with such person. It is uncivil to keep on the mask when curtsying to any one, unless from afar off; and even then it must be removed for a royal personage.”

The above rules show how greatly the mask had been in use.

In 1668, women of rank always wore an under-skirt of watered or glacé satin, with an over-skirt trailing behind, and carried over the left arm. Sleeves were puffed, and trimmed with lace and ribbon, and scarcely covered half the arm. They were not slashed. The bodice reaching to the hips, and fitting tightly to the waist, ended in a point. The under-skirt had a double border of gold and silk embroidery, while the upper one had but a single border, like the Greek and Roman tunics.

Here and there on the bodice were trimmings of gimp and ribbon, and a lace collerette covered the shoulders and chest.

Women generally wore pearl necklaces. Cuffs held an important place in a carefully arranged toilet. “I have been told,” writes Furetière, “that the wife of President Tambonneau takes a whole hour to put on her cuffs.”

Knots of ribbon were placed everywhere among lace edgings. When arranged in tiers each side of the busk in front, they were called "échelles," or ladders.

On one occasion Mme. de la Reynie's "ladders" were being spoken of with admiration before Mme. Cornuel, who replied somewhat maliciously: "I wonder she does not wear a gibbet as well." M. de la Reynie was Chief of the Police.

Ornaments of ribbon and chenille succeeded to "ladders." Buttons were fixed on braid or chenille, and corresponded with "freluches" or "fanfreluches," that is, with tufts of silk.

"Transparents" came into fashion in 1676. "Have you heard of 'transparents'?" writes Mme. de Sévigné. "They are complete dresses of the very finest gold or azure brocade, and over them is worn a transparent black gown, or a gown of beautiful English lace, or of chenille velvet, like that winter lace that you saw. 'These form a 'transparent,' which is a black dress and a gold, silver, or coloured dress, just as one likes, and this is the fashion."

The black lace worn on skirts was called "quilles d'Angleterre."

Colbert encouraged the manufacture of lace. By an edict of August 5, 1665, "a manufactory of French lace" was established on a liberal basis at the Hôtel de Beaufort, in Paris. The towns designated as the cradles of this valuable art were Arras, Quesnoy, Sedan, Château-Thierry, Loudun, Aurillac, and above all, Alençon. The commoner kinds of lace hitherto manufactured in Paris, Lyons, Normandy, and Auvergne, no longer sufficed for the popular taste.

The finer sorts were also made subsequently at Valenciennes, Lille, Dieppe, Havre, Honfleur, Pont-l'Évêque, Caen, Gisors, Fécamp, Le Puy, and the Bois de Boulogne.

French lace vied with that of foreign manufacture, including Brussels and Mechlin.

Colbert eagerly secured the services of a lady at Alençon, named Gilbert, who knew the Venetian lace-stitch, and directed her to set up a factory at Alençon.

Lace called "gueuse" and "neigeuse" was bought by persons

of small means,—other kinds, of marvellous beauty, could only be compassed by women of fortune.

The fine ladies of the seventeenth century, like those of the sixteenth, had their gowns made by men, viz. a certain Renaud, living opposite the Hôtel d'Aligre; a Sieur Villeneuve, near the Place des Victoires; Lallemand, Rue St. Martin; Le Brun, Le Maire and Bonjuste, all of the Rue de Grenelle; and lastly, Chalandat, Rue de l'Arbre-Sec.

As real pearls were very costly, a Frenchman, named Jacquin, invented a substitute for them in the century of which we are treating. He had observed that the water in which small fish called “*ablettes*” (whitebait) were washed, contained a quantity of bright and silvery particles, and by filling hollow blown glass beads with this sediment, he succeeded in producing an admirable imitation. But about twenty thousand whitebait were required to supply one pound of essence of pearls!

Silks of every kind were manufactured at Lyons, and a workman employed there succeeded in producing them with a bright lustrous finish; the process is called “*donner eau*.”

The silkworm whose silk is a perfect white was now about to be introduced into France.

The first period of feminine dress under Louis XIV. was chiefly remarkable for its monumental head-dresses.

The Sieur Champagne, by reason of his skill, and also of the value he contrived to confer on himself, was in great demand by all the fine ladies of the time.

“Their foolish behaviour made him quite insupportable, and he made the most impertinent remarks to them; some ladies he would leave with their hair half dressed.” Maître Adam petulantly exclaims:—

“J'enrage quand je vois Champagne
Porter la main à vos cheveux.”³

It was on this account, perhaps, that many of the most refined

³ “It makes me furious to see Champagne
Lay his hands upon your hair.”

women of fashion preferred female hair-dressers, some of whom were widely celebrated, viz. "Mesdemoiselles Canillat, Place du Palais Royal; D'Angerville, in the same neighbourhood; De Gomberville, Rue des Bons-Enfants; Le Brun, at the Palais; and Poitier, near the Hospice des Quinze-Vingts." They were all wives of wig-makers.

The hair was dressed "à la Ninon," carefully parted in front and flowing in loose ringlets, and partly concealed at the back by a white gauze veil.

An "appretador," consisting of a row of diamonds or string of pearls, was sometimes mixed with the hair; or twists of hair of various colours, and "postiches" or false hair.

At the time of the marriage of the Duke of Orleans with the Princesse Palatine (1671), the fashionable style of hair was called "hurlupée" or "hurluberlu." Mme. de Sévigné thought it most extraordinary. "I was greatly amused at the head-dresses," she says, "and felt inclined to give a slap to some of them." The word "hurluberlu" meant inconsiderate, brusque, thoughtless. Certain ladies were blamed for being "hurluberlu."⁴

Mme. de Sévigné afterwards changed her mind.

A female hair-dresser named Martin, who succeeded to the favour accorded to Champagne, introduced a fashion that was very becoming to some faces. The hair on each side was cut in graduated lengths, and hung in thick curls, the longest not falling much lower than the ear. Ribbons were fixed into it in the usual way, and a large curl drooped on the neck.

The "hurluberlu" developed into many varieties, among others into "paresseuses," the false wigs or long ringlets that fine ladies put on in their dressing-rooms on rising.

When Mme. de Montespan was at the height of favour, "she wore point de France, and her hair in numberless curls, one on each side of the temples, falling low on her cheeks. Black ribbons in her hair, pearls which had belonged to the Maréchale de l'Hôpital, and buckles and ear-drops of magnificent diamonds. Three or four hair-bodkins; no coif. . . ."

⁴ Hurly-burly.

On the whole the seventeenth century was prolific in pretty head-dresses. When the head was dressed “à la garçon,” a parting was made horizontally along the forehead, a few little curls waving loose, while all the rest of the hair was drawn up, and cut short on the neck. Mme. de Sévigné advised Mme. de Grignan to adopt the above style, somewhat modified: “the hair knotted low at the back of the head, so as not to conceal either its purity of outline or its harmonious proportions; the short undergrowth of hair in light curls on the forehead gives piquancy to the physiognomy, while showers of filmy ringlets on the temples add softness to the expression.”

For two years “le faire brelander” was in fashion, that is, the hair was cut short and curled. On the other hand, Nanteuil, the famous engraver, has bequeathed to us portraits of women with most luxuriant hair; long ringlets mixed with pearls rise from the crown of the head, and fall down on either side.

The “capeline” of the seventeenth century was a hat worn by ladies when hunting, or at a ball or masquerade. It was generally made of straw, with a deep brim lined with silk or satin, and was covered with feathers. Sometimes it was merely a velvet cap, trimmed with feathers of no great value.

Long ringlets were called “moustaches.” “Women wore curled moustaches hanging down over the cheeks, and reaching to the bosom. Servants and bourgeois met with great disfavour when they wore moustaches like young ladies.”

From the time of the Fronde, many Frenchwomen had continued very partial to patches. A poet, writing under the name of “La Bonne Faiseuse,” says:—

“Tel galant qui vous fait la nique,
S’il n’est pris aujourd’hui, s’y trouve pris demain;
Qu’il soit indifférent ou qu’il fasse le vain,
A la fin la *mouche* le pique.”⁵

⁵ “However a gallant may slight you,
If not to-day, he will be caught to-morrow;
Whether he be indifferent or conceited,
In the end the *fly* (*mouche*) stings him.”

In the "Adresses de Paris" (1691), De Pradel informs us that "The best patch-maker lives in the Rue St. Denis, at the sign of 'La Perle des Mouches.'"

La Fontaine tells us in verse the use of patches. He puts the following lines into the mouth of an ant:—

"Je rehausse d'un teint la blancheur naturelle,
Et la dernière main que met à sa beauté
Une femme allant en conquête,
C'est un ajustement des *mouches* emprunté."⁶

As a little fanciful adjunct, ladies wore "palatines" of white gauze, or of English point or French lace in summer, and miniver in winter. They were so called after Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria, daughter of the Elector Palatine, and second wife of Monsieur, who was the first to make use of them, in order, it is said, to avoid the immodesty of exposing her shoulders and bosom.

She was called by the courtiers "toute d'une pièce," on account of her frankness and worth, but the "palatine" was her only success at Versailles.

Until the reign of Louis XIV., leather gloves had been worn by men only, and resembled the war-gauntlets of the ancient monarchy; but during his reign women displayed the beauty of their hands by wearing either kid gloves reaching to the upper arm, or long mittens in netted silk; while charming pink or blue satin slippers, with rosettes on the instep, clad their feet. "This reminds me," says Tallemant, "of some of the queen's ladies, who, that they might wear pretty shoes, tightly bound their feet with bands of their hair, and fainted from pain in the queen's room."

High heels soon made their appearance, and continued increasing in height until heels of eight centimètres were considered quite an ordinary size.

⁶ "I increase the natural whiteness of complexion,
And the last touch put to her beauty
By a woman on her way to conquest,
Is an adjustment borrowed from the *flies* (*mouches*)."

François Colletet exclaims in "Les Tracas de Paris:"—

"Mais considère leur patin
Qui d'un demi-pied les élève."⁷

And Regnard:—

"Lise veut être grande en dépit de nature."⁸

While Voltaire adds, more recently:—

"Vous aurez maussades actrices,
Moitié femme et moitié patin."⁹

Among the best shoemakers for ladies were Raveneau, Rue des Cordeliers; Vernon, Couteaux, Gaborry, Rue des Fossés-St.-Germain; Bisbot, Rue Dauphine; Sulphour, Rue St. Séverin. The shoemaker Des Noyers, Rue St. Anne, only made "very neat shoes," and charged a gold louis for them, from which we may conclude that those of a more elegant sort were excessively dear.

The tight stays, so injurious to health, were adopted by the ladies of the seventeenth century, and to conceal the discomfort occasioned by them, fans were in constant use; these were beautifully painted and mounted in wood, mother-of-pearl, ivory, steel, or gold.

In 1656, Christina of Sweden, while journeying through France, astonished everybody by her eccentricities and the strangeness of her dress. Some French ladies asked her opinion as to whether they should use fans in summer as well as in winter.

The Queen of Sweden replied, somewhat coarsely,—

"I think not; you are windy enough as you are."

But they used their fans in summer, Christina's advice notwithstanding.

They also carried a sweet lemon in the left hand, and occasionally set their teeth in it, so as to redden their lips.

⁷ "But just think of their pattens
Which raise them half a foot."

⁸ "Tall Lise *will* be, despite of nature."

⁹ "You will have clumsy actresses,
Half woman and half patten."

From 1660 to 1680 there was little material alteration in feminine attire. There were, however, a few changes in minor details. The long pointed bodices, the short sleeves, and the full skirts tucked up over narrower petticoats, remained in fashion. Scarfs reappeared frequently. Masks had not been given up; and muffs, that were very generally worn, often served to carry about little dogs. "Dog-muffs" were sold in the shops.

An unexpected variation took place in head-dresses. The Duchesse de Fontanges was present at one of the royal hunting parties, when a gust of wind blew her head-dress aside; she tied it in its place with her ribbon-garters, the ends falling over her forehead. Louis XIV. was delighted with this curious, improvised, and, so to speak, historical invention, which was due to a mere chance. It was consequently adopted by the ladies of the court, in the first instance, and afterwards by the Parisian bourgeois, under the name of "*coiffure à la Fontanges*."

Imagine a framework of cap-wire, at least half a yard in height, divided into several tiers, and covered with bands of muslin, ribbons, chenille, pearls, flowers, aigrettes, &c.

Each separate part of the wondrous structure had its own appellation, viz. the solitary one, the duke, the duchess, the Capuchin, the cabbage, the asparagus, the cat, the organ-pipe, the first or second sky, and the mouse. The last named was a little bow of nonpareil, fixed in the mass of frizzed hair that was arranged below the curled "*fontange*."

"Une palissade de fer
Soutient la superbe structure
Des hauts rayons d'une coiffure;
Tel, au temps de calme sur mer,
Un vaisseau porte sa mâture."¹

"If a woman only moves, the edifice trembles and seems about to fall." But neither the difficulty of their construction, nor the

¹ "A stockade of wire
Supports the superb structure
Of the lofty head-dress;
Even as in time of calm upon the sea,
A vessel bears its masts."

care required for their preservation, prevented women from wearing these things.

Yet the king disapproved, and for a few months after the death of Mme. de Fontanges the ladies of the court submitted to his taste, after that interval they followed their own.

For thirty years those gigantic "heads" held their place at Versailles, under the eyes of the old monarch who "protested in vain against towering head-dresses."

There were "tignons," or "torsades," in many plaits, to annoy his majesty ; there was the "passagère," a bunch of curls on the temples ; the "favorite," a cluster falling on the cheek ; "cruches," little curls on the fore part of the head ; "confidants," still smaller ones near the ears ; and "crève-cœurs," two curls on the nape of the neck.

Each day brought forth some new complication. When was a limit to be reached ?

Two English ladies, with their hair worn low, having been presented at the Versailles court in 1714, Louis XIV. said to the wives of his courtiers,—

"If Frenchwomen were reasonable beings, they would at once give up their ridiculous head-dresses, and wear their hair in the English fashion."

Notwithstanding their spirit of insubordination, how could the court ladies bear to be called "ridiculous," especially by their king ?

They went from one extreme to the other ; and the desire to imitate the English ladies induced them to do that which the king's authority had failed to obtain from them. They very soon made their appearance in the king's "circle" with their hair dressed low. The poet Chaulieu mentions the fact :—

"Paris cède à la mode et change ses parures ;
Ce peuple imitateur et singe de la cour
A commencé depuis un jour
D'humilier enfin l'orgueil de ses coiffures." ²

² "Paris yields to fashion, and changes its adornments ;
This people, given to imitation, and copyist of the court,
Has begun a day since
To pull down the pride of its head-dresses."

Besides the stars of Versailles, Mdlle. de la Vallière, Mme. de Fontanges, and Mme. de Maintenon, there shone also, and not always with the approbation of the sovereign, the stars of the Paris stage. The influence of actresses was increasing. "All the mantles now made for women," says "Le Mercure Galant" in 1673, "are no longer plaited, but quite plain, so that the figure is better shown off. They are called mantles "à la Sylvie," although invented by Mdlle. de Molière, but they are named after a book called 'La Sylvie de Molière.' Those, however, who have read the book, know well enough that it was not his story." Mdlle. de Molière composed most splendid costumes for herself.

After the representation of *Esther* in 1689, the fashions suddenly changed. The Ninon and Montespan styles had lasted until the year of the famous jubilee of 1676. "In the early and doubtful dawn of Mme. de Maintenon's career," says J. Michelet, "and especially in those equivocal years preceding her marriage, she had adopted a head-dress which was at once coquettish and devout, which in part concealed, and in part displayed, the scarf she had bestowed on the ladies of St. Cyr, and which had been imitated by all. After *Esther*, the scarf was put aside, and the face boldly exposed. The head-dress was raised higher and higher in various ways, and resembled a mitre or a Persian tiara. Gigantic combs were worn, or towers or spires of lace, and, later, a scaffolding of hair; or the diadem-cap adopted by Mme. de Maintenon, the helmet cap, or dragoon's crest, with which the more audacious beauties (like Mme. la Duchesse) adorned their bolder charms. Her portraits, and those of De Caylus, are the prettiest of the time, and seem to be the types of Fashion."

The battle of Steinkirk, in which the Prince of Orange was defeated, was commemorated in women's dress. They wore "Steinkirk" ties, or kerchiefs, twisted round the throat with studied and graceful negligence. This was in honour of the French officers, who, taken by surprise, had only time to throw their cravats about their necks, rush out on the English, and defeat them. Mdlle. Marthe le Rochois, a singer of the day, had set the fashion by loosely tying on a cravat over her stage dress in the

opera of *Thétis et Pelée*. This was a delicate compliment, and it was appreciated and copied.

All novelties in jewellery were "à la Steinkirk." The fashion of the cravats did not last long, but was revived later in the shape of "fichus," or three-cornered silk neckerchiefs, trimmed with lace, gold fringe, or gold and silver thread.

Another fashion was derived from war. "Crémonas," or light trimmings either puffed or plaited, and sewn to both edges of a ribbon, made their appearance in 1702. They were intended to commemorate Prince Eugène's entry into Cremona, where the Maréchal de Villeroi was made prisoner.

In 1684, women still wore under-skirts trimmed with "falbalas" or bands of plaitings, or puffs either placed high up or low down on the skirt—and upper gowns with long trains, like those of 1668; but the bodice of the same colour as the train, was made with a small basque cut away in front. It was half open, and disclosed a braided stomacher, above which was a chemisette of fine muslin or lace, or a "follette," a very light kind of fichu.

Sleeves were no longer puffed, but were worn close fitting, with a lace frill.

Rosettes in satin ribbon were out of fashion. "Amadis" sleeves were seen for the first time in the stage dresses of *Amadis des Gaules*, an opera, of which the music was by Lulli, and the words were by Quinault. They had been designed by the Chevalier Bernin for Mdlle. le Rochois, in order to conceal the ugliness of her arms.

Half dress, or "négligé," consisted of a black gown, black adjuncts, and a white apron. Widows dressed in white.

Another kind of sleeve, covering the arm, was called the "Jansenist," in allusion to the severe morals of the Port Royalists, who were always warring against insufficient or light clothing.

The hair was dressed in artistically arranged curls, beneath a coif of moderate height, not unlike a hollow toque, generally speaking goffered, and made either of starched muslin or magnificent lace.

There were many sorts of caps, with hanging lappets, or

one lappet or “jardinière.” Wasps or butterflies made of brilliants, says Boursault,—

“Paraissaient voltiger dans les cheveux des dames.”³

There was also a fashionable head-dress, placed at the back of the head, and showing the ear; this was called the “effrontée,” or “barefaced.”

The costume was completed by a necklace, the inevitable fan, and the high-heeled shoes that are characteristic of a whole epoch in dress.

On the occasion of the betrothal of the daughter of Monsieur with the Duc de Lorraine, the Duchesse de Bourgogne wore on the first day a gown of silver tissue, with gold flowers, touched with a little flame-colour and green, and in her hair the finest of the crown diamonds. The next day her gown was of grey damask, with silver flowers, and she wore diamonds and emeralds. Mademoiselle wore a coat of gros de Tours richly embroidered in gold; her skirt, of silver tissue, was embroidered in gold touched with flame-colour. She wore a splendid set of diamonds, and a mantle of gold point d’Espagne, six yards and a half long, and her train was carried by the Grand Duchess. Another time her coat and skirt were both of cloth of silver, all laced with silver. Her jewels were diamonds and rubies.

“Towards 1700,” says Michelet, “the women of the time no longer show the classic features of a Ninon, or a Montespan, nor the rich development that they so freely displayed. But the devil was no loser. If backs and shoulders are concealed from our gaze, the small portion that we are permitted to admire, and that is, as it were, offered to our inspection, is but the more attractive. There is a sort of audacity about the uncovered brow, the hair drawn back so as to show its every root, the high comb, or diadem-cap, that seems little in harmony with the soft and childish features of the day. This childishness, so devoid of innocence, combined with the masculine Steinkirk, gives them the appearance of pets of the seraglio, or of impudent pages who have stolen women’s garments.”

³ “Seemed to flutter in the ladies’ hair.”

For a long time the artist Mignard enjoyed the pleasant monopoly of painting portraits of the court ladies, and these Madonnas of his were so completely the rage, that the Versailles ladies wished to be distinguished by their “mignarde” faces; they endeavoured to obtain “mignardise” of expression, they smiled “mignardement,” and put on little “mignard” affectations. The word became part of our language, and was used with great frequency in the complimentary talk addressed to women.

Mignard was succeeded by a painter called Largillière; and “mignardise” began to give way to a colder and simpler style, though still somewhat tinged with affectation. Mme. de Maintenon on one occasion wore a gown of dead-leaf damask, quite plain, a head-dress “en battant l’œil,” and a cross composed of four diamonds on her neck—a cross à la Maintenon. The *quasi*-queen having thus set the fashion of veils and grim coifs, all her faithful followers looked like heaps of black and sombre materials.





Collected from Paris

Louis XIV

1668 to 1684

HISTORY OF FASHION

Louis XV

1720 to 1750

CHAPTER XVI.

REIGN OF LOUIS XIV. (CONTINUED).

1705 TO 1715.

Painted faces—Reply of a Turkish ambassador—Ineffectual criticism—Mme. Turcaret's "pretintailles"—Mme. Bonnet's law-suit—Brocaded materials—"Andriennes"—"Criardes"—Return of "hoops" and paniers—A sailor's leap—Actresses' paniers, and the Greek head-dress—Mme. de Létorières—D'Hèle arrives frozen at the Café Procope—Waterproofs—Finishing touches—Fans and fan-makers in the seventeenth century—What Mme. de Staël-Holstein thought of fans—Transition.

"THE women of this district (Versailles)," writes La Bruyère, "hasten the decline of their beauty by the use of artifices which they imagine will increase their charms; they paint their lips, cheeks, eyebrows, and shoulders, and liberally display them as well as their bosom, arms, and ears. . . . If by the fault of nature women became such as they make themselves by art, that is to say, if their complexion suddenly lost all its freshness, and looked as fiery and leaden as they make it by the use of rouge and paint, they would be inconsolable." And he adds: "If their wish is to be pleasing to men, if it is for the men's sake that they lay on their white and red paint, I have inquired into the matter, and I can tell them that in the opinion of men, or at least of the great majority, the use of white paint and rouge makes them hideous and disgusting; and that rouge, by itself, both ages and disguises them."

This reminds us of the reply of a Turkish ambassador who, on being questioned as to the beauty of Frenchwomen, said, "I am no judge of painting."

La Bruyère criticized sharply; while Fénelon, with characteristic gentleness, pointed out that the elegant simplicity of the antique races was far more favourable to beauty than the fashions of the

day, which were tending more and more to affectation and over-ornament.

While moralists were thus testifying against their interpretation of the art of pleasing, women continued perseveringly to "improve upon Nature," and load themselves with pretentious finery. They sneered, like the men, at the Abbé de Vassetz's "*Traité contre le Luxe des Coiffures*," and at the satirical prints on extravagant dress.

Exaggeration robbed the tight-fitting bodices of all grace; and "pretintailles," enormous cut-out patterns laid on to skirts of a different colour, made the dress unbearably heavy. There was an extraordinary variety of nomenclature in the fashions of the reign of Louis XIV. The author of *Attendez-moi sous l'Orme*, a comedietta in one act, performed in May 1694, puts the following remark into the mouth of one of his characters, Agatha, a farmer's daughter:—

"How clever the Paris ladies must be to invent such pretty names!"

To which Pasquin, the valet, replies,—

"Malapeste! Their imagination is lively enough! Every fashion they invent is to conceal some defect. Falbala high up for those who have no hips; lower down for those who have too much. Long necks and flat chests brought in the Steinkirk; and so it is with everything."

The critics were in the right, but let us admit that women were not in the wrong.

On what grounds did the former attempt to limit feminine caprice? Criticism is easy; the art of pleasing is much more difficult.

Large cut-out patterns laid on a dress were called "pertintailles" or "pretintailles." Lesage mentions them as a new thing in *Turcaret*:—

"I am always eager after new fashions," says Mme. Turcaret. "I have them all sent to me (in the country) immediately after they come out, and I flatter myself that I was the first to wear pretintailles in the town of Valognes."

Now we must remember that the comedy of "Turcaret" was first performed in February, 1709.

Falbalas and pretintailles were much alike. The falbala itself was known in ancient times, but the name was invented by M. de Langlée.

A caricature was published on the *Poule d'Inde en Falbala*. Beneath the engraving were the following lines:—

"Femme, en pretintaille et fontange,
Croît être belle comme un ange ;
Mais ce vain falbala, par son ample contour,
La rend grosse comme une tour,
Et tout cet attirail si fort l'enfle et la guinde,
Qu'elle ressemble un poulet d'Inde."¹

Our ancestors used to hum a song on the pretintaille to the tune of "La Cheminée du haut en bas :"—

"Lorsqu'une chose est nouvelle,
C'est assez pour estre belle ;
Des autres on fait peu de cas,
La, la, la,
La pretintaille en falbala !

"Il n'importe qui l'invente,
Quoyqu'ell' soit extravagante,
De bon goût lui cèdera,
La, la, la,
La pretintaille en falbala !

"Mais on la voit disparaître
Au moment qu'on la voit naître,
Car tout change et changera,
La, la, la,
La pretintaille en falbala !" ²

¹ "A woman in 'pretintaille' and 'fontange'
Thinks herself as beautiful as an angel ;
But this vain falbala, by its vast size,
Makes her as big as a tower ;
And all this set-out inflates and stuffs her up,
Until she resembles a fat turkey."

"When a thing is new,
That suffices to make it handsome,
And little is thought about other things,
La, la, la, &c.

The "pretintaille" continued to encroach.

A "devanteau," or apron, was sometimes "pretintillé" to such an extent, that the biggest piece was no larger than the palm of the hand. Falbalas were "pretintillés," for instance, by putting on first a red, then a green, then a yellow one, and then alternating the above colours. Flounces were "pretintillés" in four or five colours: first, a green one, then yellow, red, blue, and white successively.

When the fashion of "pretintailles" first came in, Mme. Bonnet's dressmaker brought an action against her for the sum of 800 livres, the cost of making a "pretintaille" skirt, and gained her cause. Mme. Bonnet was condemned in costs. The bargain had been made at one denier for every yard of sewing.

After the rage for "pretintailles" had passed away, materials with large brocaded patterns in gold or colours came into fashion, and gowns resembled window-curtains. Knots of ribbon were fixed on the tucked-up skirts; but these again were succeeded by "andriennes," or long, loose, open dresses, like those worn by the actress Marie Carton Dancourt in Terence's "Andrienne."

For a long time past women who wished to show off a slender waist had been wearing "criardes," or dress-improvers of stiffened linen. In 1711 the vertugadins came again into fashion under the name of "hoops" and "paniers."

Certain authors contend that hoops first made their appearance in Germany, whence they found their way to England, and then returned to the Continent by way of France. Paniers were but revived vertugadins, of exaggerated size.

The noise made by the stiffened linen, when pressed against ever so lightly, obtained for them the expressive name of

"No matter who invents it,
So that it is extravagant,
Good taste yields to it,
La, la, la, &c.

"But it disappears
Almost as soon as it appears,
For all changes and will change,
La, la, la, &c.

“criardes.” “Paniers” were so called because they resembled cages, or poultry-baskets. Their framework was open, and the hoops of straw, cord, cane, or whalebone were fastened together by tapes.

Small women, with these paniers on them, were as broad as they were long, and looked at a distance like moving balls. At the concert in the grand reception-room, Mdle. du Maine, who was wearing enormous paniers, placed herself too near the queen, and incommoded her so much that her majesty could not bear it in silence. In order to prevent the recurrence of such inconvenience, it was ordered that thenceforth the princesses should not draw their seats so near the queen, nor on the same line with her armchair.

Coopers and basket-makers undertook the manufacture of dress-improvers. In vain were these articles railed against; they prevailed over satire of every kind. Paniers were the ruin of homes, the dread of husbands, and the misery of passers-by.

Paniers for morning wear were called “considérations.”

If we may believe M. Emile de la Bédollière, a writer on fashions in France, one Panier, a “maître des requêtes,” was drowned on the passage from Martinique to Hâvre. His name became a catch-word; and ladies amused themselves by asking each other as they displayed their dress,—

“How do you like my ‘maître des requêtes’?”

The jest produced laughter, but the wit is open to criticism.

Paniers, however, remained in fashion, and even increased in size. In vain did men protest against them. There is a story told of a sailor, who, meeting two ladies in the city of Paris whose paniers took up the whole width of the street, found it was impossible to get past them. Pride forbade him to turn back, and in a moment he had taken a flying leap over paniers and ladies, to the admiration and applause of the spectators of both sexes.

An actress, who was making her first appearance in the character of a princess betrothed to a king of Sparta, appeared on the stage in a panier five yards and a half in circumference, under a skirt

of silver gauze. This was trimmed with puffs of gold gauze and pink crape, edged with blue jet, and with bouquets of roses scattered here and there. The under-skirt was of pink silk. Trailing garlands of roses were fastened on by sashes of fringed-out cloth of silver. The train dragged six yards on the floor. Handsome silver embroidery, mingled with white roses, bordered the gown; the sleeves were half-long, draped like the skirt, and caught up with diamond buttons, over pink silk like that of the slip. Her bracelets were of rubies and diamonds, and above the panier was a belt of "strass," or imitation diamonds and rubies.

Her hair was dressed in what the celebrated hair-dresser Herain was pleased to call the Greek style. A quantity of hair, frizzed into the shape of a pyramid upside down, was framed in roses, gems, and silver gauze. A regal crown surmounted the whole, and a long veil hung down to the edge of the gown. The veil was "*à vapeur d'argent*," that is, of very light gauze covered with gold spangles; on the left side was an enormous cluster of pink and white feathers, topped by a gigantic heron.

This extraordinary attire was completed by gloves from Martials; white silk stockings with pink and silver clocks, and shoes to match, with heels at least three inches in height.

Louis XIV. presented Mdlle. de Brie and Mme. de Molière with the mantles worn by them in the comedy of the "*Sicilien*." This was an additional reason for actresses to be included among the queens of fashion. Did they not receive presents from the king?

It is hard to believe, but members of the sterner sex also yielded to the fascination of hoops. They, too, had their paniers, consisting of whalebones fitted into the wide basques of their coats.

M. de Létorières had "a straw-coloured watered silk coat, faced with a dark green material shot with gold; a green and gold shoulder knot (*aiguillette*), and a set of large and small crystal opal buttons set in brilliants, as also was the handle of his sword; his hair was arranged in two waving locks powdered

with tan-coloured powder, and fell lightly and gracefully on his neck."

In those days, Fashion ruled very despotically, and took no heed of the severity of the winter.

One very cold day, D'Hèle made his appearance at the Café Procope dressed in nankeen.

"How do you manage to dress like that?" exclaimed his friends.

"How do I manage? Why, don't you see gentlemen, I freeze!"

Whether for paying visits, or for walks, camlet rain-cloaks or waterproofs were worn in wet weather, and in cold weather "balandrans" were worn, that is, cloaks with armholes.

In the seventeenth century, precious stones took the principal place as ornaments; and gold, however beautifully chased in garlands, flowers, or designs of all sorts, was only used to set and show them off. The provost of trade at Lyons issued an edict forbidding the goldsmiths to sell stuffs woven with silver at more than seventy francs a yard.

But we know the uselessness of sumptuary laws. Numerous and costly articles for the toilet, real specimens of industrial art, were produced in accordance with the prevailing fashions. There is a tobacco-grater in the Louvre collection which evidently belonged to some lady or gentleman of the time of Louis XIV. It is rather well carved in ivory.

Large fans with handles were in fashion towards the year 1700. It was considered a mark of high breeding for men to chastise their wives and daughters with them. This was putting fans to a singular use, which probably did not last long.

The trade in fans increased to such an extent in France, and particularly in Paris, that the workers formed themselves into a guild, like the guilds of other trades. They petitioned for statutes and privileges, which were willingly granted to them by Louis XIV. In the eighteenth century there were more than five hundred manufactories of fans in Paris.

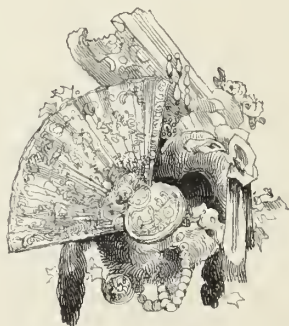
From this we may judge how widespread was their use.

“Let us picture to ourselves,” wrote Mme. de Staël to a friend, at a later period, “let us picture to ourselves a most charming woman, splendidly dressed, graceful and gracious in the highest degree: yet if with all those advantages she manages her fan in a ‘bourgeoise’ way, she may at any moment become a laughing-stock. There are so many ways of playing with that precious appendage, that by a mere movement of the fan one can tell a princess from a countess, a marchioness from a plebeian. And then it imparts such gracefulness to those who know how to manage it! Twirling, closing, spreading, rising or falling, according to circumstance!”

Mme. de Staël carefully abstains from describing fans as adopted for the “chastisement of wives and daughters.” A monstrous innovation, probably, in her opinion.

There is a scarcely perceptible transition between the reign of Louis XIV. and that of Louis XV.

Mme. de Maintenon’s influence, which had caused a momentary eclipse in the brilliant costumes of Versailles, soon passed away, and the passion for the most eccentric novelties became stronger than ever, at court, in the palaces of princes, and in the salons of the *bourgeoisie*.



CHAPTER XVII.

REIGN OF LOUIS XV.

1715 TO 1774.

The Regency—War is declared against paniers—The Oratorian Duguet—Opinion of the “Journal de Verdun”—Various publications against paniers—Lines by Voltaire—Whale-fishery company—Paragraph from the “Journal de Barbier”—Mmes. Jaucourt, De Seine, Delisle, Clairon, and Hus—Lines in praise of corsets—New bodices—Coloured prints are forbidden—“Perses” or “Persiennes”—Bagnolette—Adjuncts of dress: necklaces, ridicules, and poupottes—Contents of a patch-box—A sermon by Massillon—*Les mouches de Massillon*, or Massillon’s patches—*Filles de Mode*, Fashion-girls—Some passing fashions—Powder remains in fashion—“Monte-au-ciel”—Simply made gowns—The first cachemire.

It is impossible to draw any line with regard to fashion between the Regency of the Duke of Orleans and the reign of Louis XV. Both the regent and the king appear to have acted on the same motto: “All for pleasure.” Both yielded the empire of fashion into the hands of women, without attempting to exercise the almost absolute sway of Louis XIV. over dress, even when not of an official character, and women ruled with a high hand, and for no small space of time. The poet Destouches puts the following lines into the mouth of one of the characters in “L’Homme Singulier:”—

“Je fais mon plus grand soin du soin de me parer,
Rien ne me flatte plus qu’une mode nouvelle.”¹

Both sexes proved him to have been in the right, by indulging all their personal fancies and predilections.

During the Regency of the Duke of Orleans, dress was essentially light in material; gowns were made with basque bodies, pagoda sleeves, and trimmed with knots of ribbon, or “chicorées,” or even

¹ “My chiefest concern is the care of my attire;
Nothing pleases me more than a new fashion.”

with artificial flowers. The hair is dressed either "à la culbute" or "à la doguine."

Enormous paniers were worn in the reign of Louis XV.; they came into fashion in 1718, and were very cleverly constructed. Few ladies were found to object to them, although in walking they occupied a space, from left to right, of quite six feet, their circumference being at least eighteen.

War was, however, declared against paniers, just as in former times against vertugadins; the clergy especially attacked them violently.

An Oratorian named Duguet published a "Traité de l'Indécence des Paniers." After many phrases wide of the mark, we come to the following, which seems to be the best argument of all against paniers: "This fashion is owned, even by those who are most devoted to it, to be very inconvenient. Paniers are most uncomfortable, both for the wearer and for every one else." But ladies heard the Oratorian and heeded not, any more than they had heeded an edict which, during the madness induced by Law's speculations, had forbidden them to wear jewels or diamonds, for fear they might be exchanged for shares or notes of the Mississippi Bank.

The "Journal de Verdun," October, 1724, writes in the same spirit as Père Duguet: "In former times mothers used to take exceeding pains that their daughters should have slender and supple waists; but at the present day the vertugadins of Spain and Italy have been introduced into France under the name of paniers; this is a fashion conducive to false modesty." But the ladies in this instance, also, heard and heeded not, and the "Journal de Verdun" after a time discontinued its attacks.

Many cases of conscience were argued out between Jesuits and Jansenists on the subject of paniers. One member of the Society of Jesus wrote a little work called "L'Entretien d'une Femme de Qualité avec son Directeur sur les Paniers." It was published in 1737, and is a very scarce and curious little book.

An anonymous pamphlet had been published in 1727, entitled, "Satire sur les Cerceaux, Paniers, Criardes, et Manteaux Volants

des Femmes, et sur leurs autres ajustements.” The author expatiates on his hatred of cages, and of showy dress.

A pamphlet published in Paris in 1735, and entitled, “*Indignité et Extravagance des Paniers pour des Femmes Sensées et Chrétiennes*,” contains the following lines:—

“But I wish to know, ladies, by what evil genius you are possessed, and what can be your opinion of us, that you endeavour, when in such deplorable case, to pass yourselves off to us and to the eyes of the Christian world as spiritual and devout persons, while you are laden with an immense and superb panier that takes up the room of at least six persons, and is the miserable cause of the inconvenience you experience in passing along, having to hold your panier in both hands, and displaying wooden hoops under an arrogant and splendid skirt. . . .

“Is it not the said panier also that makes your carriages groan, and that bulges through them like the sails of a ship, while you are holding your noble wooden hoop in both hands, and displaying it beneath a costume that is a scandal to the Church, and a laughing-stock to the whole world, and that insults the magnificence of our altars by its audacious splendour?”

Ridicule, argument, and religion were all in vain; neither the women of Paris, nor those of the provinces, changed their mode of dress in the slightest degree. They even laughed at Voltaire and his lines:—

“Après dîner, l’indolente Glycère
Sort pour sortir, sans avoir rien à faire.
On a conduit son insipidité
Au fond d’un char où, montant de côté,
Son corps pressé gémit sous les barrières
D’un lourd panier qui flotte aux deux portières.”²

History has probably forgotten a considerable number of the appellations bestowed on paniers; but some have been retained,

² “After dinner, the indolent Glycera
Goes out, just for the sake of going out, having nothing to do.
Her insipidity is deposited in a chariot,
Wherein her tightened body groans under the trammels
Of a heavy panier which protrudes from the two windows.”

such as "paniers à guéridon," or "extinguisher" shape; and "à coudes," or "elbow paniers," on which the elbows might be supported.

The fashion prevailed so generally, that our trade with Holland was materially augmented. In June, 1722, the States-General of the Netherlands authorized a loan of 600,000 florins in support of a "company established in East Friesland for the whale fishery, the trade in which increased daily by reason of the demand for whalebone used in the construction of hoops for women."

We see here that the result of the polemical discussions described above was twofold. Paniers became a question of interest to Europe, and a source of profit to Holland.

The "Journal de Barbier" observes: "It will scarcely be believed that the Cardinal de Noailles has been much exercised with regard to the paniers worn by women under their skirts in order to make them stand out. They are so large, that when the wearer sits down, the whalebones being pushed fly up in an extraordinary manner, and armchairs have had to be constructed expressly for them. The largest boxes at the theatre will now hold only three women. The fashion has been carried to an extreme, and is consequently quite extravagant; so much so, that when the princesses take their seats beside the queen, their skirts rise up, and quite conceal those of her majesty. This appeared like an impertinence, but it was difficult to find a remedy. At last, by dint of reflection, the cardinal invented an expedient—there should always be one armchair left empty on each side of the queen, who would thus be spared any inconvenience."

Mlle. Jaucourt played the part of Galatea in "Pygmalion" in 1775, and wore a polonaise with paniers, satin slippers, and a colossal "pouf" ornamented with green leaves, and surmounted by three ostrich feathers. MM. de Beauvau, De Guéménée, De Pompadour, and others, had supplied her wardrobe. A great number of the court ladies sent her beautiful dresses, made by themselves, and worn at the Dauphin's marriage, that she might appear in them on the stage. Louis XV. presented her with a theatrical costume.

In November, 1721, he had given Mme. de Seine, an actress of the Comédie Française, a coat worth 8000 francs. Nine hundred ounces of silver were woven into the material.

At about the same time the Comte de Charolais presented Mdlle. Delisle with a costume of pure silver, worth 2000 crowns, in which she danced a "pas" in the ballet of Pirithoüs.

Mdles. Clairon and Hus, of the Comédie Française, gave up wearing on the stage "the awkward machine called a *panier*," and a little book was published shortly afterwards, called "*Les Paniers supprimés au Théâtre.*" Some ladies of high rank followed the example of the two celebrated actresses.

Mdles. Clairon and Hus had exercised more influence than preachers, pamphleteers, or journalists!

Actuated by a hatred of *paniers*, a poetaster wrote in praise of corsets, and women discarded one folly for another.

"Est-il rien plus beau qu'un corset,
Qui naturellement figure,
Et qui montre comme on est fait
Dans le moule de la nature?"³

Thereupon women wore the bodice of their gowns tightly drawn in at the waist, and with busks that bruised the chest of the wearer.

Then again, as in 1694, sleeves were made flat, and trimmed with frills. A new material was used for gowns, little bouquets printed or brocaded on a ground of silk, marcelline, or satin. The arms were protected from the cold by a miniature muff and warm furs.

"Robes volantes," or loose gowns without a belt, came into general use about 1730. For the most part they were made of white or rose-coloured silk, especially for young girls, who also often wore gauze or embroidered muslin frocks over a coloured silk slip.

³ "Is there anything more beautiful than a corset,
Which naturally defines the figure,
And shows how one is made
In the mould of nature?"

A few years later, Christophe Philippe Oberkampf introduced "indiennes," or coloured prints, into France. On their first appearance, such jealousy was excited in the various guilds, that not only were those who manufactured them sent to the galleys, but women who ventured to wear these prints were liable to a fine on a mere accusation. The examiners at the custom stations were directed to remove by force the gown of any delinquent, or even to tear it in pieces while on her back. It is difficult in our day to understand such severe treatment.

Before Oberkampf's time, coloured cambrics from India, called "Perses" or "Persiennes," because they came by way of Persia, were much worn. A beautiful persienne was of more value than a silk gown. The most brilliant woman, perhaps, of the period entreated the French ambassador in Russia to procure her a set of furs and some "perse." Yet a while, and the purchase of a gown would have become an affair of state; or the king might have declared war in order to obtain a costume desired by the queen.

The hair was dressed "en dorlotte" (or pamper-fashion), "en papillon" (or butterfly-like), "en vergette" (or whisk-fashion), and "en désespoir" (despair), "équivoque" (suspicious-wise), and "en tête de mouton" (sheep's head). A kind of curtainless hood was worn, called a "baignolette."

In summer, women wore the mantilla, a variety of the scarf, and in winter, furred pelisses, buttoned from top to bottom. They wore embroidered stockings and white shoes with high heels, as previously. The ambition of all was to have the smallest possible shoes; and women contrived, as it were, to manufacture feet for their shoes, in imitation of Camargo, the dancer, whose shoemaker amassed a large fortune. Parasols, or sunshades, were not made to close; umbrellas, on the contrary, were made to fold and shut.

Among the accessories of dress were necklaces, bags or reticules, persistently called "ridicules," "poupottes," or horsehair pockets which the "bourgeoises" wore fastened to their gowns, eyeglasses mounted in gold and enamel, gold needle-cases, tablets set in

chased gold, and crosses of gold filagree. To these we must add powder scattered on the hair, which was drawn up in a tuft, and kept in its place by a silk chin-band, patches of black silk sticking-plaster, and the white and red paint, which many women laid on so thickly that their faces were quite incrustated with it. A woman of rank would have lost all consideration had she appeared at the promenades without her patches and her rouge.

Both paint and patches were used in the very last toilet of princesses—that of the tomb.

Every woman of fashion possessed a patch-box, whose lid was lined with looking-glass. A very pretty one in pink mother-of-pearl, inlaid with silver and designs of figures, was to be seen at the Exhibition in 1878.

The “impassioned” patch was fixed at the corner of the eye; the “gallant” in the middle of the cheek; the “recéleuse” (or receiver of stolen goods) on a spot or pimple; the “effrontée,” or bold-faced, on the nose; and the “coquette” on the lips. A round patch was called “the assassin.”

The widespread fashion of patches afforded further opportunities for criticism. Massillon preached a sermon in which he anathematized patches. The effect produced by his discourse was rather unexpected; patches were worn in greater numbers than ever, and were known as “mouches de Massillon.” Fashion was incapable of reverence, and triumphed over every kind of opposition.

It was generally held that patches conferred an appearance of youth. Mme. de Genlis said on one occasion to an author, whom she honoured by allowing him to see her place two or three patches on her cheek and chin,—

“Well! what do you think of that? Would you not take me for a girl of twenty?”

Powder, i.e. starch powdered and scented, was in common use under Louis XV.; and in the reign of Henri IV., as Estoile observed in 1593, nuns had even been seen walking in Paris, with their hair curled and powdered, but this, it must be admitted, was an exception. No lady appeared at the promenades, the theatre,

or the court of Versailles, without what was called an "œil," or slight sprinkling of powder.

The "filles de mode," as fashionable milliners were called in the eighteenth century, had no light duties to perform. It was a serious task to dress a lady of quality from head to foot. They had to carry out the ideas that originated with the queens of society. According to Mme. de Lespinasse, the prim Mme. du Deffant "was the best milliner of her day," that is, her taste in composing an irreproachable costume was superior to all others, and the greatest coquettes copied the fashions seen in her drawing-room.

In "La Mode," a comedy in three acts by Mme. de Staal, a marquis is made to say,—

"You need only hear an account of our day! In the morning, discussions with workpeople and tradespeople over the choice of our dress! And what trouble do we not take to secure the last novelty, to choose all that is in the best taste, and to avoid any prejudice concerning a particular fashion! . . . Next comes the excessive labour of making our toilet, with all the attention necessary to ensure being well dressed . . ."

The Comtesse de Mailly retired to rest every night with her hair dressed, and wearing all her diamonds. She used to call her tradespeople "her little cats."

High head-dresses came into fashion again for a short time, during the reign of gigantic paniers, and were worn with powder. It took a whole day to complete one of those monuments of the capillary art, which were of such enormous size, that according to "Le Mercure de France" of 1730, ladies could not sit in their coaches, but were obliged to kneel.

"Their woolly white hair," says Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who visited Paris at the time, "and fiery faces, make them look more like skinned sheep than human beings."

Mme. de Graffigny, the author of "Lettres Péruviennes," protested against the high head-dress. She wore her hair powdered, but close to her head and covered with a little cap. This "little cap" was adopted by many women of rank, and for several years was worn by all Frenchwomen. Women of the people still

wear round caps with two plaited wings coming forward on the temples, and called "le bat en l'œil." "The bourgeois have retained," says "Le Livre de la Coiffure," "the full-crowned cap, surrounded with ribbon twists or bows, with two lappets falling over the chignon, and frills of lace curving round the temples."

Some ephemeral fashions were introduced into France by the Polish princess Maria Leczinska, the wife of Louis XV.

"Hongrelines" were worn, and polonaises, or "hongroises," trimmed with "brandebourgs;" and, in 1729, embroidered mantillas of velvet and satin lined with ermine or other fur, the two ends finished with handsome tassels, that were tied behind the waist.

The "palatine" was thus no longer a solitary German fashion on the banks of the Seine.

Powder remained in vogue for more than half a century. No doubt the softness it conferred on the features, and the brilliancy it lent to the eyes, made it pleasing to everybody. It was still worn in 1760, and again in 1780, and after the Revolution it reappeared under the Directory in 1795.

There is no occasion, therefore, to speak of powder more particularly. In 1760, a lady wore powder, but her hair was drawn back "à la Chinoise," and on the summit was a small knot of coloured silk. She wore stays, despite all that might be said against them by the doctors and the critics; and a fichu or kerchief straight across the shoulders, and called a "monte-auciel." She had a "casaquin" or a "caraco." She wore as her only garment a "peignoir," a loose robe not confined at the waist, and fastened down the front with bows of ribbon. Round the throat was a ruche of the same material as the dress; the sleeves extended to the wrist, where they became considerably wider, and could either be hooked up like those of French advocates at the present day, or were finished off with turned-back cuffs.

The first Indian shawl, or "cachemire," seen in our country was imported towards the end of the reign of Louis XV. It was long the talk of both court and town, but no attempt was made to manufacture similar shawls in France.

At the period we have now reached, the simplicity of women's attire contrasts with previous styles ; and is in harmony with the serious tone of society under Louis XVI.

A transformation in dress is at hand. We are about to see extraordinary and brilliant fashions adopted by ladies of rank, and by those of the "haute bourgeoisie," but not followed by the middle classes, on account of their great cost. The guests at Versailles and Trianon could afford to dress "à la mode," because their wealth was immense and their extravagance boundless.

The reign of lace ended with the eighteenth century, for Louis XVI. cared little for embroidery and finery.

The drive to Longchamps in Holy Week afforded to the rich an opportunity of displaying the splendour both of their equipages and their dress, and it has continued to exist to the present day.



CHAPTER XVIII.

REIGN OF LOUIS XVI.

1774 TO 1780.

The influence of Marie Antoinette on fashion—Letter from Maria Theresa—Léonard and Mdlle. Bertin—Various styles of head-dresses—"Pouf"—The "Journal de Paris"—Reign of Louis XVI.—Male and female hair-dressers—Plumes—Hair worn low—The queen's "puce"-coloured gown; shades of colour in dresses—Oberkampf and the Jouy prints—Expensive satins—Trimmings, their great number and importance—Gauze, blond, tulle, and ribbons—Some kinds of shoes—Venez-y.voir—The "Archduchess" ribbons—A dress worn at the opera.

WE have now reached the reign of Louis XVI., when Marie Antoinette was holding her court. She had already begun to set the fashion when only Dauphiness.

One day, in 1775, the new queen took up from her dressing-table two peacock feathers, and placed them with several little ostrich plumes in her hair. Louis XVI. came in, and greatly admired his wife, saying he had never seen her look so well. Almost immediately feathers came into fashion, not in France only, but throughout Europe. But when, shortly afterwards, Marie Antoinette sent a portrait of herself, wearing large feathers as a head-dress, to her mother, the Empress Maria Theresa returned it. "There has been, no doubt, some mistake," wrote Maria Theresa; "I received the portrait of an actress, not that of a queen; I am expecting the right one."

This severe rebuke had no effect. Before 1778 the hair had been so arranged as to form a point in front, called a "physionomie," accompanied by "attentions," or thick, separate curls. But in 1778 the queen invented the "hérissou," or hedge-hog style of head-dress. Imagine a porcupine lying on the top of the head, that is to say, a bush of hair frizzed from the points to the roots,

very high and without powder, and encircled by a ribbon that kept this horrible tangle in its place. This style of head-dress, somewhat modified, and reduced to a "demi-hérisson," or half hedgehog, was in fashion for several years.

Marie Antoinette continued to invent new styles, such as "jardin à l'anglaise," "parterre," "forest," "enamelled meadows," "foaming torrents," &c. How many ridiculous names were given to the inventions of ladies endeavouring to imitate and surpass their queen! The hair was dressed "butterfly" fashion, or "spaniels' ears," or "milk-sop," or "guéridon," or "commode," or "cabriolet," or "mad dog," or "sportsman in a bush," by turns.

At the clubs or in the public gardens, every one talked in raptures of the achievements of Léonard, "Academician in coiffures and fashions," and those of Mdlle. Bertin, a milliner who at a later period delivered herself as follows:—

"The last time I worked with the queen, we decided that the new caps should not come out for another week."

A didactic mode of expression! Turgot or Necker could not have spoken more solemnly. It is true that Mdlle. Bertin's fame had spread throughout Europe.

In the "coiffure à la Dauphine" the hair was curled, and then drawn up from the forehead, falling at the back of the head; that called "monte-au-ciel" was of enormous size.

In 1765, caps were worn "à la Gertrude," so called from the opera-comique *Isabelle et Gertrude*, by Favart and Blaise; and in 1768, caps "à la moissonneuse" (the reaper) and "à la glaneuse" (the gleaner) came into fashion, copied from those worn in the opera of the *Moissonneurs*, by Favart and Duni. Head-dresses named "d'apparat" (or state head-dresses) or "loges d'opéra" (opera-box head-dresses) were seventy-two inches in height; they came in in 1772. Gluck's *Iphigénie en Aulide* was performed in 1774. The singer who took the part of Iphigenia wore, when about to be sacrificed, a wreath of black flowers, surmounted by a silver crescent, and a long white veil flowing behind. Every lady immediately adopted the lugubrious coiffure "à l'Iphigénie."

Now that we are on the subject of theatricals, I may mention that in 1778, Devismes, the director of the opera, made it a rule that only head-dresses of moderate height might be worn in the amphitheatre.

The comet of 1773 gave its name to certain head-dresses, in which flame-coloured ribbons played a striking part; in 1774 a "quésaco" head-dress was invented,¹ consisting in part of a large bunch of plumes behind the head. At court the "pouf au sentiment" was much in favour; it was composed of various ornaments fastened in the hair, viz. birds, butterflies, cardboard Cupids, branches of trees, and even vegetables. Louis Philippe's mother wore a "pouf" in which every one might admire the Duc de Beaujolais, her eldest son, in the arms of his nurse, a parrot pecking at a cherry, a little negro, and various designs worked with the hair of the Dukes of Orléans, Chartres, and Penthièvre.

The "coiffure à la Belle Poule" consisted of a ship in full sail, reposing on a sea of thick curls. In the "Jeu des Costumes et des Coiffures des Dames," an imitation of the "Royal Game of Goose," the winning number, sixty-three, was assigned to the "Belle Poule."

The scaffolding of gauze, flowers, and feathers was raised to such a height that no carriages could be found lofty enough for ladies' use. The occupants were obliged either to put their heads out of the windows, or to kneel on the carriage floor, so as to protect the fragile structures. This seems like a return to the reign of Louis XV.

In a letter addressed to the actors of the Italian Theatre, in January 1784, by Lenoir, the lieutenant of police, we read as follows: "There are constant complaints of the size of head-dresses and hats, which, being loaded with plumes, ribbons, and flowers, intercept the view of spectators in the pit. . . ."

A number of caricatures, of which some—to the horror of all monarchists—actually reproduced the features of Marie Antoinette, were brought out in ridicule of the fashionable head-dresses.

¹ This is a Provençal expression, meaning, "What does it mean?" or "What is it all about?"

Hair-dressing was a difficult art, requiring time and labour. Country ladies employed a resident female hair-dresser in their house, by the year, and on the occurrence of any family festival she would be kept at work nearly the whole day.

In order to show the importance of this subject, we quote from the "Journal de Paris" of February 10, 1777, to which was added a supplementary engraving with the following explanation:—

"We add to our issue of this day an engraving representing two different dressings of the hair, back and side views; they are drawn from nature by a clever artist who has been kind enough to give us his assistance. The figures 1 and 2 refer to one of these methods, the figures 3 and 4 to the other.

"If by this attempt we succeed in giving pleasure to those ladies who are included among our subscribers, we shall be happy to renew an expenditure that proves our zeal in their service."

No satire was intended by the above publication. The "Journal de Paris" was a grave production, and the prints it published were of "moderate" head-dresses, if I may so express myself, of no excessive height, powdered, and such as might be worn by bourgeois without appearing extraordinary.

Besides the fashions we have described, there were others from 1774 to 1789, viz. "Grecques à boucles badines" (or Greek with playful ringlets), "à l'ingénue," "à la conseillère," "l'oiseau royal," "chien couchant," "les parterres galants," "les calèches retroussées," and many others, the description of which would fill volumes.²

Marie Antoinette continued to rule the fashionable world; nor can we be surprised that the flattery of courtiership "took up the tale." In honour of Louis XVI.'s accession, hats were invented under the name of "delights of the Augustan age," and a colour called "queen's hair," of a pretty blonde tint.

For many years a great rivalry had subsisted between the male

² It will not assist the reader's imagination much to give the translation of these extraordinary names; but here they are: "the ingenuous maiden," "the counsellor's wife," "the royal bird," "dog lying down," "gallant pits," "calèches with the hoods up."

and female hair-dressers, and towards 1775 an amusing law-suit was commenced between the former and the wig-making barbers. "We are," contended the hair-dressers, "essentially ladies' hair-dressers. . . . What are the duties of barbers? To shave heads, and purchase the severed hair; to give the needful plait by means of fire and iron to locks that are no longer living; to fix them in tresses with the help of a hammer; to arrange the hair of a Savoyard on the head of a marquis; to remove the attribute of their sex from masculine chins with a sharp blade; all these are purely mechanical functions that have no connexion with our art. . . ."

They went on to say that the art of dressing women's hair was nearly allied to genius; and that in order to exercise it nobly, one should be at once a poet, a painter, and a sculptor. "It is necessary to understand shades of colour, *chiaro oscuro*, and the proper distribution of shadows, so as to confer animation on the complexion, and make other charms more expressive. The art of dressing a prude, and of letting pretensions be apparent, yet without thrusting them forward; that of pointing out a coquette, and of making a mother look like her child's elder sister, of adapting the style of dress to the disposition of the individual, which must sometimes be guessed at, or to the evident desire of pleasing . . . in fine, the art of assisting caprices, and occasionally controlling them, requires a more than common share of intellect, and a tact with which one must be born."

I am not drawing on my imagination. The memorial of the ladies' hair-dressers is still in existence, and bears the names of the procureur and advocate-general of the time. The artists in hair exclaim in poetical accents, "If the locks of Berenice have been placed among the stars, who shall say that she reached that height of glory unaided by us!" They vaunt their honesty: "The treasures of Golconda are continually passing through our hands; it is we who decide how to arrange diamonds, crescents, sultanas (a particular form of necklace), *aigrettes*." They compare themselves to heroes: "A general knows how to take advantage of a demi-lune in front of his position—in the van, he has his engineers;

we, too, are engineers so far; a crescent advantageously placed by us is hard to contend against, and it seldom happens that the enemy does not surrender at discretion! . . . A lady's hair-dresser is, as it were, the first officer of the toilet . . . and under his artistic hands, amid his artistic influences, does the rose expand and acquire her most brilliant beauty."

The conclusion to be drawn is that wig-makers and their assistants are evidently unfit to dress the hair of women.

The law proceedings, however, did not prevent the competition of wig-makers and female hair-dressers, even at the period when all trade guilds were suppressed.

"The toilet of the queen of France was a masterpiece of etiquette, according to Mme. Campan; everything was done by rule: the lady of honour and the lady of the bedchamber were both present, assisted by the first dresser, and two others who did the principal part of the service; but there were distinctions to be observed. The lady of the bedchamber (*dame d'atours*) put on the queen's petticoat and handed her gown, the lady of honour poured out water for washing the royal hands, and put on the queen's chemise."

Marie Antoinette carried the fashion of "panaches" or plumes to an extreme. If we may believe Soulavie's memoirs of the period, "when Marie Antoinette passed through the gallery at Versailles, one could see nothing but a forest of waving plumes a foot and a half higher than the ladies' heads." The king's aunts, who could not make up their minds to follow such extraordinary fashions, nor to copy the queen's dress day by day, used to call her feathers "ornaments for the hair."

The majority of the court ladies, however, imitated the queen.

Hats and caps were so overladen with feathers, that not only were coaches too small to contain the plumed dames of the period, but ladies were fain to bend their heads in the "entresols" of certain suites of rooms, because of the lowness of the ceilings."

"Nevertheless," says a lady of the court, "it was a fine sight to see that forest of plumes in the Versailles Gallery, waving with

the least breath of air. It looked like a moving garden of bright-coloured flowers, gently caressed by the zephyrs."

There was, however, a party in opposition. According to Mme. Campan, "mothers and husbands grumbled, and there was a general feeling that the queen would ruin all the French ladies." But discontent and criticism were vain; Fashion as usual had her way, and feathers sometimes fetched as much as fifty louis (1250 francs) apiece.

Generally speaking, the smallest caprices of Marie Antoinette were received as law by the ladies of the court. When, on the occasion of the birth of one of her children, her beautiful fair hair was cut off, and she consequently adopted a "coiffure basse," the "coiffure à l'enfant," or baby's head-dressing, immediately became the rage. No one could be found to say a word against it, nor to hesitate at sacrificing her hair to the prevailing fashion. There were, nevertheless, many styles of dressing the hair: "au plaisir des dames" (the ladies' pleasure), "à l'urgence" (the urgent), and "à la paresseuse" (the idle). At the same time various hats came into fashion, viz. the "artiste" (the artist), the "grandes prétentions," (great pretensions), the "bandeau d'amour" (the bandeau of love), the "Carmelite," the "lever de la reine" (Queen's lever), the "novice de Cythère" (the Cytherean novice), and the "prêtresse de Vénus" (the priestess of Venus). The hat "à la révolte" was so called in allusion to the Flour warfare, or Grain disturbances, under Turgot.

When Marie Antoinette took a fancy for playing at shepherdesses and a so-called rural life at Trianon, the great ladies of Versailles dressed their hair "à la laitière" (milkmaid) and "à la paysanne de la cour" (court peasant). The Parisians, on the contrary, wore successively hats "à la Suzanne" (from *Le Mariage de Figaro*), "à la Randon" (from *Bayard*, a play by Monvel), and "à la diadème," or turban-shaped.

In the early summer of 1775, the queen made her appearance in gown of a kind of chestnut-brown, and the king said laughingly,—
"That puce (flea) colour becomes you admirably."

The next day every lady at the court wore a puce-coloured

gown, old puce, young puce "ventre de puce" (flea's belly), "dos de puce" (flea's back), &c.

As the new colour did not soil easily, and was therefore less expensive than lighter tints, the fashion of puce gowns was adopted by the bourgeoisie, and the dyers were unable to meet the pressing requirements of their customers.

During the reign of Louis XVI., many new colours were worn, either in combination or successively, such as "puce," "rash tears," "Paris mud," Carmelite, "entraves de procureurs" (procureur's tricks), &c. These were all quiet colours, and were used for simple costumes.

In 1763, the Opera House was burnt down; and the fine ladies would wear nothing but "couleur tison d'opéra," or "brand from the opera;" in 1781, they held to "opéra brûlé," or burnt opera-house. I should find it difficult to describe these two shades otherwise than as flame-coloured.

After the performance of *Athalie* at the Court Theatre, in 1780, women of fashion wore the Jewish Levitical tunic; and shortly after the opera of *Atys* (by Quinault and Lulli) had resumed its place on the stage, they dressed their hair "à la doux sommeil" (gentle slumber). Mme. Dugazon, in *Blaise et Babet*, an opera by Desède (1783), wore a blue silk skirt shot with pink, and shot silks became all the fashion. In 1786 the same actress set the fashion of caps "à la Nina," from Dalayrac's opera of that name. "Coiffures à la créole" were worn next, made of Madras handkerchiefs, like those in Kreutzer's opera of *Paul et Virginie*; and lastly, hats "à la Primerose," from another play of Dalayrac's.

During many years of the reign of Louis XVI., the court of Versailles was ignorant of the very name of Oberkampf, a manufacturer who had at last (1759) obtained permission to establish a factory of coloured prints (indiennes) near Versailles.

A mere accident made him suddenly famous. A certain great lady, whose Persian cambric was the envy of all the princesses, had the misfortune to tear it. She hastened to the factory at Jouy, and claimed the help of Oberkampf, who succeeded in his

efforts to produce a similar gown, and whose name was immediately in every one's mouth. The ladies at Versailles would wear nothing but Jouy cambrics; and from that time prints have been constantly worn by the women of the people, but they are seldom seen at the present day.

Gowns trimmed with one material only were much in favour; straw-coloured satin was very much used. These dresses were trimmed in various ways, either with gauze, lace, or fur. There were innumerable varieties of trimming, besides brocaded or painted satin, and each had its own special name.

The most fashionable tint for satin was either "sourir étouffé" (stifled sigh), or apple-green with white stripes, called "vive bergère" (the lively shepherdess).

Some of the names given to trimmings are curious, and remind us of the "précieuses" of the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Such are: "indiscreet complaints," "great reputation," "the unfeeling," "an unfulfilled wish," "preference," "the vapours," "the sweet smile," "agitation," "regrets," and many others.

Paniers were generally small, but padded at the top. Shoes, either puce colour or "queen's hair," were embroidered in diamonds, and women's feet might be compared to jewel-cases. Long narrow shoes, with the seam at the heel studded with emeralds, were called in the trade "venez-y-voir," or "come-and-see."

Women wore over their shoulders an arrangement of lace, gauze, or blond, closely gathered, and called "Archiduchesse," or "Médicis," or "collet monté." Tulle was in great request, and was manufactured everywhere.

As for ribbons, the most fashionable were called "attention," "a sign of hope," "a sunken eye," "the sigh of Venus," "an instant," and "a conviction." Sashes were worn "à la Praxitèle," an opera by Devismes. Once more we are reminded of Molière's "Précieuses."

A great sensation was caused at the opera one night by the arrival of a lady dressed as follows. Her gown was "a stifled sigh" trimmed with "superfluous regrets," with a bow at the

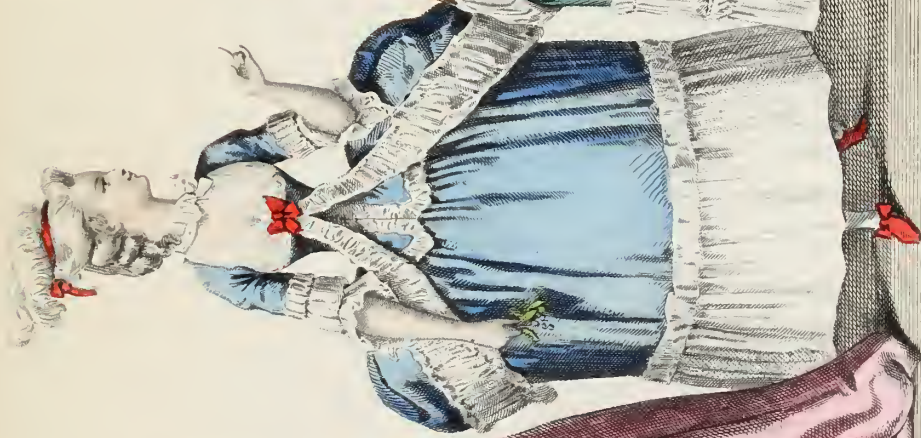
waist of "perfect innocence," ribbons of "marked attention," and shoes of "the queen's hair" embroidered in diamonds, with the "venez-y-voir" in emeralds. Her hair was curled in "sustained sentiments," a cap of "assured conquest" trimmed with waving feathers and ribbons of "sunken eye," a "cat" or palatine of swans'-down on her shoulders of a colour called "newly-arrived people" (*parvenus*), a "Médicis" arranged "as befitting," a "despair" in opals, and a muff of "momentary agitation."

Since that evening how many extraordinary costumes have been displayed at the opera, and have attracted the attention of the fair spectators!





Louis XVI
1789



Louis XVI
1789

HISTORY OF FASHION

CHAPTER XIX.

REIGN OF LOUIS XVI. (CONTINUED).

1780 TO 1789.

Peasant dress is universal—Fashion “à la Marlborough”—Caps—Bonnets—Mdlles. Fredin and Quentin—Ruches—Low bodices; “postiches”—Costume of Contat-Suzanne—Fashions “à la Figaro”—Literature and politics signified in dress; the Princess de Monaco’s pouf—Pouf “à la circonstance;” the “inoculation” pouf—The “innocence made manifest” caraco—The “harpy” costume—Coats, cravats, and waistcoats—Sailor jackets and “pierrots”—Deshabilles; “the lying fichu”—Etiquette in dress—Seasonable costumes—The queen’s card-table—State of trade in Paris, *circa* 1787—“Pinceauteuses,” or female colourers.

IN 1780 the ideal of Fashion was the peasant costume. Duchesses playing at milkmaids in the park at Trianon adored everything rural, and did their best to resemble shepherdesses. They longed to play the parts of Mathurine and Nicolette, only their diamonds must still be allowed them. The Chevalier de Florian was beginning to acquire a reputation as a writer of pastoral romances, very much to the taste of the ladies of his time. His novel of “Estelle and Némorin” inculcated bucolic manners and graces.

But the humblest fashions may be splendidly travestied! Cap-bonnets were adopted by all the court ladies, but in combination with flowers, ribbons, and feathers, composing a charming spring-like head-dress.

The smallest caprice of Marie Antoinette was still sedulously copied. One day she began singing the air of “Marlbrouck,” and all French ladies immediately dressed “à la Marlborough,” and sung their queen’s favourite air from morning to night. Mme. Rose Bertin forwarded costumes “à la Marlborough” to England.

In the previous century, Bachaumont had written as follows:—
“Ever since the song came out, Marlborough has become the hero

of every fashion ; everything nowadays is ‘à la Marlborough,’ and all the ladies walk about the streets, or go to the play, wearing the grotesque hat in which they are pleased to bury their charms, so great is the empire of novelty.”

Marie Antoinette partially revived the rage for fashions “à la Marlborough.”

Four years later, Frenchwomen gave up the caps I have mentioned for straw bonnets from Italy, which were immediately preferred above all others, and which remained in fashion for above a century. One milliner would choose a shape with perpendicular crown, hidden under a mass of ribbon ; another would adopt an enormous funnel-shaped brim, loaded with feathers or flowers.

It has been calculated that in the course of two years, from 1784 to 1786, the shapes of hats were changed seventeen times. There were some called hat-caps, “chapeau-bonnets,” because their balloon shape resembled a cap. There were small close shapes in silk, trimmed with feathers and flowers, worn on one side of the head ; and soon afterwards there were very large bonnets “à l’amiral.” We read in the “Journal des Modes de Paris,” 1785 : “There is a hat on view at Mdlle. Fredin’s, milliner, at the sign of the ‘Echarpe d’Or’ (Golden Scarf), Rue de la Ferronnerie, on which is represented a ship, with all her rigging complete, and her battery of guns. . . . At Mdlle. Quentin’s, in the Cité, there are ‘pouf’ hats composed of military trophies, the flags and drums arranged on the brim have a charming effect.” Some hats were so enormously large that they overshadowed the whole face like a parasol. And some aimed at satire ; they were of black gauze, and called “à la Caisse d’Escompte,” because they were without crowns (sans fond). This referred to the wretched state of the public treasury ; the Caisse d’Escompte having just suspended payment.

Gowns, whether of silk or of plain material, continued to be made open down the front, over an under-skirt of another colour ; but for a simple style of dress, both skirts might be alike.

Gimp trimmings had been succeeded by ruches of muslin or

lace, sewn to the edge of the dress, and arranged like flounces. Sleeves were always tight and short; fans and bracelets, pearl necklaces, and sometimes a watch, fastened at the side, were worn also, and immense earrings "à la créole," that had been first seen in *Mirza*, a ballet by Gardel. Gowns were worn rather long, scarcely revealing the satin shoes with buckles, and the smooth-drawn white stockings.

We may here recall the "calembourg" made by the Marquis de Brévre to Marie Antoinette: "Madame," said he, "'l'univers' (the universe) is at your feet."

By way of compensation for the length of the skirts, bodices were cut so low that the shoulders were visible.

Paniers were out of date, but "postiches" had taken their place. These postiches soon became so enormous, that even young and slender women looked like towers of silk, lace, ribbon, and flowers. Fashionable marquises wore satin pelisses, white, pink, or sky blue, trimmed with ermine or miniver, and a muff in winter.

Occasionally, in a fit of simplicity, they contented themselves with a silk hat, and an elegant caraco, or a satin mantle trimmed with broad lace.

Sometimes, also, they expressed their literary or political proclivities by their dress.

The "Philadelphia" cap was intended to commemorate the independence of the United States, about the time of Franklin's visit to Paris.

The immense success of *Le Mariage de Figaro* effected a change in the fashions, and the costume in which Mdlle. Emilie Contat had been applauded to the echo in the part of Suzanne became the order of the day. All that year, the ladies adopted "le déshabillé à la Suzanne," dressed their hair "à la Cherubino," wore their gowns "à la Comtesse," and their bonnets and caps "à la Figaro."

After the performance of *La Brouette du Vinaigrier*, by Mercier, caps "à la brouette" (wheelbarrow) came into fashion. *La Caravane*, by Grétry, brought out caps "à la caravane." *La Veuve du Malabar*, a five-act tragedy by Lemierre, was so

popular, that extraordinary caps were devised, "à la veuve de Malabar."

Louis XVI. thought proper, on a certain occasion, to forbid the court in general to enter the royal carriages in order to follow the hunt. To ensure greater freedom, he desired the company of real sportsmen only. The nobles immediately protested, and the Princesse de Monaco expressed her disapproval of the new regulation through the medium of her "pouf" hat, on which was displayed the king's coach in miniature, padlocked, and two gentlemen in gaiters following the hunt on foot.

On the left side of the "pouf de circonstance," worn at the accession of Louis XVI., was a tall cypress, wreathed with purple pansies, a twist of crape at the foot represented its roots; on the right was a wheatsheaf lying on a cornucopia, from whence tumbled a profusion of figs, grapes, and melons, made of feathers.

In honour of the discovery of inoculation for small-pox, Mdlle. Bertin invented the "pouf à l'inoculation," viz. a rising sun, and an olive-tree in full fruit; round this was entwined a serpent bearing a club wreathed with flowers. The serpent and the club represented medicine, and the art by which the variolous monster had been vanquished; the rising sun was emblematic of the young king, in whom were centred all the hopes of the monarchists; and the olive-tree symbolized the peace and tranquillity resulting from the operation to which the royal princes had submitted.

The "innocence made manifest" caraco was invented in 1786, in honour of Marie Françoise Victor Salmon, who had been tried on a charge of poisoning, and acquitted in the June of that year. The counsel for the defence was one Cauchois. The same caracos were also called "à la Cauchois." They were of lilac pekin, with collars and facings (parements) of apple-green. They were fastened on one side of the front by four large mother-of-pearl buttons, and similar buttons were placed on the lapels.

In the catalogue of extraordinary costumes worn in 1783 and 1784 we must include the "harpy" costume, which owed its existence to the published account of the discovery in Chili of a

two-horned monster, with bat's wings, and human face and hair, which was said to devour daily one ox, or four pigs. A songwriter composed the following lines against the new fashion:—

“A la harpie on va tout faire,
Rubans, lévites et bonnets ;
Mesdames, votre goût s'éclaire :
Vous quittez les colifichets
Pour des habits de caractère.”¹

An anonymous writer gallantly replied:—

“La harpie est un mauvais choix ;
Passons sur ce léger caprice ;
Mais dans les modes quelquefois
Le sexe se rend mieux justice,
En suivant de plus dignes lois.
Mesdames, j'ai vu sur vos têtes
Les attributs de nos guerriers ;
On peut bien porter des lauriers,
Quand on fait comme eux des conquêtes.”²

The epigram did not modify the “instructed” taste of women, who continued to dress themselves “à la harpie” until the occurrence of some new whim. Our Frenchwomen, for instance, copied the English, who had introduced masculine fashions into their dress.

In all our public resorts, ladies were to be seen in coats, with braid and lapels, double capes, and metal buttons. The most elegant women were muffled up in cravats, shirt frills, and waist-

¹ “Everything is to be ‘à la harpie ;’
Ribbons, frock-coats, and caps ;
Ladies, your taste grows instructed,
You are abandoning gewgaws
For a costume in character.”

² “The ‘harp’ is ill chosen ;
Let us pardon this caprice ;
But sometimes in the fashions
More justice is done to the fair sex,
And worthier laws prevail.
Ladies, upon your heads I have seen
The attributes of our warriors,
And laurels may fittingly be worn
By those who are conquerors.”

coats, and wore two watches with chains, "breloques," and seals. Some even wore men's hats, and carried canes.

The same ideas from across the Channel induced women to wear sailor jackets and "pierrots." This latter appellation was given to a tight-fitting garment, cut low in the neck, and fastening in front, very open at the bottom; the sleeves were tight, with turned over cuffs (parements), and the long basques were trimmed with buttons.

A still more eccentric style of dress was that of gowns "à la Circassienne," with a fichu or "canezou," and an undress gown "en caraco," so cut as to expose the pit of the stomach, notwithstanding the immense cambric kerchief that stood out preposterously in front, and was called by the malicious a "fichu menteur" (a deceitful or lying fichu).

Gowns "à l'Anglaise" and "à la Circassienne" were for occasions of ceremony; coats, pierrots, and caracos for morning dress.

We may also mention among the whimsicalities of fashion, garments "à la Montgolfier," after the invention of balloons, sheath-dresses "à l'Agnès," and chemises "à la Jésus."

The difference between full dress and half dress continued to be strictly observed; and before proceeding further we may point out that from the reign of Louis XIV. to the French Revolution the dress of men and women alike was entirely regulated by etiquette, by which we mean not the code of courtiers only, but the sanction of recognized custom.

Materials were classified according to the seasons. In winter, dress was restricted to velvet, satin, ratteen, and cloth. After the fêtes of Longchamp, which may be considered as the assizes of fashion, the lace called "point d'Angleterre" made its appearance. Mechlin lace was worn in summer. In the intermediary seasons of spring and autumn, light cloth, camlets, light velvets, and silks were habitually worn.

Immediately after the Feast of All Saints, November 1st, all furs were taken from their cardboard receptacles, and at Easter-tide most ladies put away their muffs.

Full dress was obligatory for promenades in the Tuileries Gardens.

At court, when a lady had attained her eighth lustre, or, to speak more prosaically, when she reached the age of forty, she wore a coif of black lace underneath her cap, and tied it below her chin. The editor of the "*Memoirs of Mme. de Lamballe*" tells us that after "the queen's card-table" (*jeu de la reine*) most of the ladies retired to change their gowns, because the front had been soiled by the gold they had received. Possibly they did not wish Louis XVI., who disapproved of the "queen's card-table," to perceive that their taste did not correspond with his.

At the close of the eighteenth century, Paris contained 38 master makers of needles and pins, 542 knitted cap and cuff-makers, 82 female bouquet-sellers and florists, 262 embroiderers, 1824 shoemakers, 1702 dressmakers, 128 fan-makers, 318 workers in gold and silver stuffs, &c., 250 glove-makers and perfumers, 73 diamond-cutters, 659 lingères, 143 dancing-masters, 2184 mercers, 700 barbers and male and female wig-makers, 24 feather-dressers and plume-mounters, 735 ribbon-sellers, and 1884 cutters-out of coats and gowns.

In 1776 the feather-dressers combined their business with that of fashionable dressmakers. Mercers sold lace, silks brocaded in gold and silver, gold braid, gold and silver net-work, and woollen materials of various kinds.

Turgot suppressed the guild of female bouquet-vendors, and ruled that women should pass "masters" in any profession suitable to their sex, not only as embroiderers and milliners, but also as hair-dressers. Increased grace and delicacy in feminine attire was the result of this innovation. Large numbers of skilled mechanics obtained a respectable livelihood by goldsmiths' and jewellery work, by skin-dressing, or working in silk, wool, cloth, and cashmere. Coloured cottons were sold in great quantities; women were employed in their manufacture, to colour the material. They were called "pinceauteuses." Very superior muslin was produced in France, and the art of dyeing made continual progress, owing to the efforts of the greatest chemists of the age.

From the princess to the working woman, the fair sex neglected

nothing that might increase their attractions. A moralist has justly observed : "I have heard of women wanting bread, but never of one who went without pins."

We shall meet with some exceptions to this rule during the Revolution; but they only help to prove it, and were of brief duration.

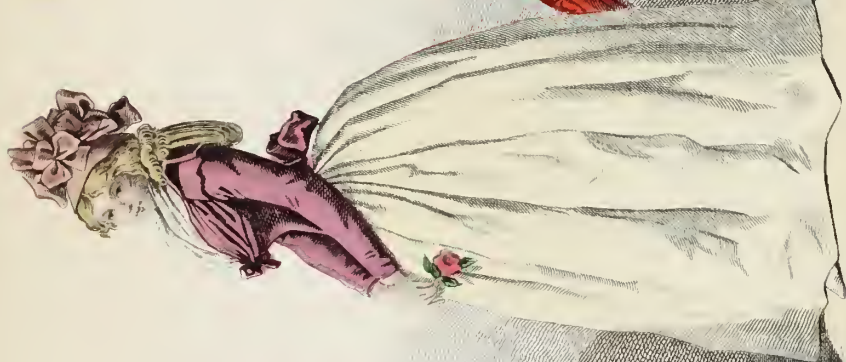




Republic
from 1790 to 1792



Republic
1793 and 1794



Republic
1793 and 1794

CHAPTER XX.

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

1789 TO 1804.

The year 1789—Masculine style of dress—The double dress vanishes—Caps “à la grande prêtresse,” “à la pierrot,” and “à la laitière”—The “pouf” bonnet—Paint and powder disappear—Prediction by the *Cabinet des Modes*—Anonymous caps—Cap “à la Charlotte Corday”—Trinkets “à la Bastille”—Mme. de Genlis’ locket—Cap “à la Bastille”—Federal uniforms—Claims to equality in dress—Reaction under the Directory—“Incroyables” and “merveilleuses”—Coiffures “à la victime” and “à la Titus”—Blond wigs and black wigs—The Hôtel Thélusson—*Which is the most ridiculous?*—Mme. Tallien’s costume—Epigram on bonnets “à la folle”—Reticules—Transparent dresses—Lines by Despréaux.

TIME has passed, and we have reached the year 1789. For a while, at least, we must bid farewell to the reign of Fancy. Farewell, Arcadia! Farewell, ye shepherdesses! Fashion is about to become simpler, as the horizon darkens.

At the period we have now reached, the tastes of women were serious, just as those of their husbands were political. They repaired to the Champs Elysées in the dress of Amazons, wearing great coats and black hats, carrying a cane or a whip, wearing a watch on each side, and a bunch of rattling “breloques,” seals, and other appendages. Their hats were helmet-shaped.

Such was the costume of the more audacious among them. Others, who shrank from adopting masculine attire, assumed a matronly appearance by wearing long trailing gowns of sober tint, either in silk or some fancy material.

All wore very short-waisted bodices, displaying a good deal of the bosom, unless it were hidden by a gauze kerchief, or long scarf, which was either printed in colours, braided, or brocaded.

The fashion of two dresses, one worn over the other, that had been so general in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and the first half of the eighteenth, had completely disappeared in

favour of one gown only. The arms were either altogether bare, with a sort of padded strap at the shoulder, or were covered from shoulder to wrist by plain tight sleeves.

Caps were occasionally worn, with velvet or silk crown, lace frillings, and a graceful bow of ribbon above the forehead. These caps were tied under the chin by a ribbon of the same colour, and fastened at the back by a similar rosette.

The caps of former times were little worn. Some, however, still remained in fashion; for instance, caps "*à la grande prêtresse*" (high priestess); these were made of white gauze, and encircled by a broad ribbon. Old ladies still wore caps "*à la pierrot*," trimmed with quantities of lace. Nor were caps "*à la laitière*" (milkmaid) quite given up; they were worn at the back of the head. In 1789, the national cockade was worn.

Generally speaking, ladies preferred bonnets, and straw bonnets in particular, trimmed with flame-coloured ribbon, and displaying waving locks under the brim. Others wore "*pouf*" bonnets, with the most extraordinary arrangements, on the outside, of military or naval trophies; these were very popular for several years.

Everybody carried a fan, or an embroidered handkerchief, in the left hand.

But the women would no longer use either paint or powder—a miracle due to the Revolution. Powder they considered unnecessary, paint ridiculous, and both savoured of aristocracy.

What a change had taken place between 1789 and 1795, in the aspect of the fair sex. At the time of the Convocation of the Notables, caps were made "*a la notable*," trimmed with beads, artificial flowers, and feathers; next came caps "*à la Turquie*," "*à la Béarnaise*," and lastly "*à l'anonyme*," for new names could no longer be found for all the vagaries of fashion.

The "*Cabinet des Modes*" of Nov. 5, 1790, observes: "Our way of living is becoming purified; extravagance and luxury are diminishing." The anticipation was correct, but it applied to a very brief period.

Women either wore caps "*à la Charlotte Corday*," a shape that

is well known at the present day, or went bare-headed, or wore at most a Greek fillet, or a "baigneuse" trimmed with a large tricoloured cockade, and showing the hair turned up in a chignon. Expensive costumes were very rarely seen. "Déshabillés" in coloured Jouy cambrics, Madras kerchiefs, or small red ones, took the place of brocades and silks and velvet caracos.

Yet Fashion contrived to respond to all the events of the time. The smallest trifle that attracted the attention of the masses was instantly turned to account in some adjunct of dress. Was a rhinoceros or an elephant exhibited at the Jardin des Plantes. Instantly caps were manufactured "à l'éléphant," or "au rhinocéros."

A swallow pursued by a sparrow-hawk having fallen to the ground on the Pont Neuf, a head-dress "à l'hirondelle" was forthwith invented. It consisted of two little gauze wings stretched on steel springs, which fluttered at each side of the head with the lightest breeze. A Chinaman came to Paris, and immediately there was a rage for hair dressed "à la Chinoise," and for pointed shoes. Crescents were worn in the hair, in honour of the Turkish ambassador's arrival in the capital.

With regard to jewellery, the case was the same. On the taking of the Bastille, small fragments of its stones were set in gold or silver, and worn as necklaces, bracelets, and rings. The well-known Mdle. de Genlis wore a locket made from a stone of the Bastille, cut and polished, and bearing the word "Liberté" in brilliants; above this a diamond represented the planet that shone on July 14, and round the locket was a laurel-wreath in emeralds, fastened by the national cockade in precious stones—blue, red, and white.

The fashions "à la Bastille" lasted for some time. The cap "à la Bastille" represented a doubly castellated tower in black lace.

A favourite head-dress was a hat, with a spade, a sword, and a cross embroidered in green silk, surrounded by olive branches; symbolic of the three estates—the nobility, the clergy, and the "third" (tiers)—as they met in the Constituent Assembly.

Fashionable Frenchwomen adorned themselves with jewels "à la Constitution," also known under the name of "Rocamboles." Their so-called "Constitutional" earrings were of white glass, in imitation of rock-crystal, and bore the word "Patrie." A very large bouquet, "à la nation," was worn high up on the left side, composed of flowers of the three colours, mingled with a profusion of myrtle.

A costume "à la Constitution" comprised a helmet-shaped cap of black gauze, a cambric neckerchief, a vermillion sash, and a very fine cambric gown covered with little bouquets of white, blue, and red flowers.

In the course of the following year, 1790, the Federation at the Champs de Mars was commemorated by the creation of the Federal uniform for ladies by a dressmaker of the Palais Royal. Fans "à la fédération" were on sale, and women, joining in the movement, wore hats in honour of "the nation and the charms of liberty," with flowers, feathers, and tricoloured ribbons.

I might give many more examples, for each event of the Revolution was marked by a corresponding innovation in dress, but let it suffice to state that at the period of which I am speaking, the whole theory of fashion was based on the assumption of equality in dress. This may be proved by referring to an engraving of the time, that I have published in my "Histoire-Musée de la République."

All classes were commingled, willingly or unwillingly, through love or through fear; and many wealthy persons rigidly adopted simple attire.

It is easy to understand the effect of this state of things on Fashion. The Revolution had proscribed gowns of silk or white muslin, as recalling too vividly the attire of the Ancien Régime. The Republican style of garment entirely enveloped the wearer, and gracefully defined the figure. It was fastened with buttons, and a sash "à la Romaine" was knotted on one side. The effect, taken as a whole, was charming. Jouy cambric was the material usually adopted; the "déshabillé à la démocrate," however, allowed of a "pierrot" in brownish-green satin.

The reign of Rose Bertin had ceased with that of Marie Antoinette.

But although the queen of France found no one to take her place, that of the queen of Fashion was aspired to by a Mme. Rispal, who, advertising in the "*Journal de Paris*," "offered a choice of dresses '*pékin velouté et lacté*' (velvety and milk-like), in African silk and in Chinese satin." She undertook, moreover, to make up caracos "*à la Nina*," "*à la Sultane*," and "*à la cavalière*;" short skirts "*à la Junon*" and "*à la Renommée*;" and gowns "*à la Psyché*," "*à la ménagère*," "*à la Turquie*," and "*au lever de Vénus*."

The above were republican garments, of which the cost bore no comparison with that of dress in the eighteenth century.

But the reaction of Thermidor was followed by a reaction in dress; and under the Directory, when the Terror was over, women went from one extreme to the other, and spent ruinous sums in flowers, jewellery, and diamonds.

In this respect the year 1795 is a remarkable one. Were the fashions of Louis XV.'s time about to return? Were red heels, paniers, powder, and patches "coming in" again? Well, not absolutely; but the return to things of the past was manifested in many ways, and the more so because the number of parties, balls, and concerts was simply incalculable.

The imitation of the classical dress worn by the Greeks and Romans produced the "*incroyables*" and the "*merveilleuses*," the mere pictures of whom seem to us at the present day like caricatures, and afford us some idea of the extraordinary freaks of Fashion.

Carle Vernet has given us admirable types of the "*merveilleuses*," who were the feminine exaggerations of the time of the Directory; of the "*incroyables*" it is not within our province to speak. However, amid all their exaggeration, the chief types of fashion under Barras and La Réveillère-Lepeaux are plainly discernible.

Anglomania was the rage. "Everything that is untouched by Anglomania," says "*Le Messager des Dames*" in 1797, "is declared, by our *merveilleuses*, to be '*bourgeois*' to a frightful degree; to be

in hideously bad taste." This somewhat singular predilection, at a time when we were at war with the English, is explained by the fact that Mdlle. Rose Bertin's workwomen had left France in order to take up their residence in London.

The Anglomania of the "merveilleuses," however, soon faded before a more serious passion—"anticomania." Every woman wished to dress in the antique style, and painters provided models for ladies "de grand genre." Head-dresses were various. The hair was sometimes cut short and curled, and sometimes powdered and drawn back from the face, after a fashion that recalls to some extent the reign of Louis XVI.

Gowns were short waisted, with long tight sleeves or short ones, the arms bare, or covered with long kid gloves; the skirt rather trailing, and trimmed with gimp, put on in Greek patterns. The foot and white stocking of the "merveilleuse" was scarcely visible beneath her dress "à la Flore" or "à la Diane." She also affected tunics "à la Cérès" and "à la Minerve," and coats "à la Galatée."

A simple kerchief, or a small shawl of plain cashmere, was worn on the neck. Felt hats, not unlike those worn by men, were occasionally trimmed with flame-coloured ribbons. But the more fashionable "merveilleuses" preferred a toque trimmed with ribbon in like manner, and very effectively ornamented with a couple of white aigrettes.

"What confusion, and what fickleness!" observe the brothers De Goncourt. "Caps à la paysanne, à la Despaze, and Pierrot caps! Caps à la folle, à la Minette, à la Délie, à la frivole, à l'Esclavonne, à la Nelson! There a simple bit of muslin, and an unpretending gauze lappet; here a turban turned up with five blue feathers! A turban, made by La Despaux, 'that Michael Angelo of milliners,' will be formed of a pink handkerchief; another will be of lilac crape, two rows of beads, and above them a rose and a heartsease! And as for hats! hats 'à la Primrose,' negligently covered with a half handkerchief; turban hats, round hats 'à l'Anglaise,' gleaner's hats, Spencer hats, and beaver hats, owe their names to Saulgeot! Does Mme. Saint-Aubin take the part

of *Lisbeth*? Mdlle. Bertrand flings a large bunch of roses on straw, and it becomes a hat ‘à la Lisbeth.’ The assembly of the Norman electors is nicknamed ‘the chess-board of Normandy,’ and a ‘chess-board hat’ immediately makes its appearance.”

We must also mention wigs “à l’Aspasie,” “à la Vénus,” “à la Turque,” Greek and Roman wigs, art head-dresses in the style of Sappho; “Doisy” nets, linked tiaras formed of the glittering links of a threefold chain of gold; and “les cheveux baignés,” that is, the real hair, worn with a diamond crescent.

By way of ornament, dressmakers frequently made use of small pieces of gold, silver, copper, or steel, very thin, and with a hole in the middle; they were generally of circular shape, were sewed on to the material, and called spangles.

Thence the popular song:—

“Paillette aux bonnets,
Aux toquets,
Aux petits corsets!
Paillette
Aux fins bandeaux,
Aux grands chapeaux!
Paillette
Aux noirs colliers,
Aux blancs souliers!
Paillette,
Paillette aux rubans,
Aux turbans.
On ne voit rien sans
Paillette!”¹

¹ “Spangles on the caps,
On the toques,
On the little bodices!
Spangles
On the soft hair-bands,
On the large hats!
Spangles
On the black necklaces,
On the white shoes!
Spangles,
Spangles on the ribbons,
On the turbans.
Nothing is to be seen
Without spangles!”

All the adjuncts of dress remind us of antique times ; we may note the shape of shoes in particular—when, indeed, women were not satisfied with wearing gold rings on their feet. It is curious to remark how greatly shoes resembled sandals, only partially covering the upper part of the foot. They consisted of a light sole, fastened to the leg by ribbons. Coppe was the principal “cothurnus” maker, and was said to lend to that class of foot-covering “inconceivable colouring, freshness, eloquence, and poetry !”

Dresses called “Athenian” were made of diaphanous material. They were open at the sides, from the waist to the lower edge of the tunic. Gowns made with trains were worn for walking.

The celebrated Eulalie was particularly clever at drawing the long trains of gowns “à l’Omphale” through the sash. If any one presumed to assert that from their feet to their heads women were too little clothed, they would reply,—

“ Le diamant seul doit parer
Des attraits que blesse la laine.”

Their light attire exposed them to diseases of the chest, nay, to death itself, but they braved all dangers for the sake of Fashion. The gold rings shining on their feet could not protect them from the cold of winter, and yet they remained faithful to gauze-veiled nudity. A fashion of wearing no chemise lasted only one week.

In consequence of the depreciation of the paper currency, sixty-four francs in assignats was charged for the making of two caps ; gauze for three caps cost 100 francs ; two dozen cambric-muslin pocket-handkerchiefs cost 2400 francs ; a brown silk gown, 1040 francs ; and a batiste gown edged with silk, 2500 francs.

This was in 1795. A year later an embroidered tarlatan mantle cost 7000 francs ; the making of a cap cost 300 francs ; a gown and a fan, 20,000 francs ; and the silk for a mantle, 3000 francs.

These extraordinary prices rose higher still as the value of the paper currency diminished.

The best dressmakers were Nancy for Greek, and Mme.

² “ The diamond only ought to adorn
Charms which are hurt by wool.”

Raimbaut for Roman costumes. A Parisian lady required 365 head-dresses, the same number of pairs of shoes, 600 gowns, and twelve chemises.

Among the ephemeral fashions of the Directory one was to dress the hair “à la victime.” This entailed the loss of the victim’s tresses, which were cut off quite close to the head. Ladies who adopted the coiffure “à la Titus” were absolutely compelled to wear a red shawl and a red necklace, that the whole costume might be in harmony.

Many ladies always dressed their hair “à la sacrifiée.” They were also partial to wigs, blond at first, and afterwards black, though this “anti-revolutionary” style met with great opposition both on the stage and in print. Twelve blond wigs were included in Mdle. Lepelletier de St. Fargeau’s wedding trousseau. Mme. Tallien possessed thirty; each cost five and twenty louis.

At a party at the Hôtel Thélusson, great admiration was excited by a lady whose hair was dressed in the Greek style,—a band of cameos representing Roman emperors encircled her head. Her gown was of crape, embroidered in steel.

Between 1799 and 1801, the fashions, it must be conceded, were not particularly graceful. A caricature that has almost become an historical document, appeared under the Consulate. It represents a gentleman and lady both dressed in the extreme of fashion, in 1789, 1796, and 1801.

Beneath the picture the author asks the question, “Which is the most ridiculous?”

But women cared little for what might be said of them; they laughed at comments, epigrams, and caricatures alike.

Not only did Mme. Tallien create a furore of admiration at the Frascati balls, in an Athenian gown, wearing two circlets of gold as garters, and with rings on her bare and sandalled feet, but there were other heroines of fashion, if I may so express myself, who dressed “à la sauvage,” or threw over their shoulders a blood-red shawl (*sang de bœuf*), squeezed their waist into stays “à l’humanité,” and wore on their heads either a hat “à la justice” or a cap “à la folle.”

The following epigram was composed on the caps “à la folle :”—

“ De ces vilains bonnets, maman, quel est le prix ?
 —Dix francs.—Le nom ?—Des bonnets à la folle.
 Ah ! c’est bien singulier, interrompit Nicolle :
 Toutes nos dames en ont pris.”³

Fine ladies carried an embroidered bag or reticule, vulgarly called “ridicule.”⁴

In 1803 a certain great lady wore a tunic of netted beads, with pearls in her hair, which was dressed diadem fashion. At the King of Etruria’s fête, her hair was arranged like the quills of a porcupine ; a long gold chain and enormous locket hung round her neck. Another lady adopted a cap exactly like her grandfather’s night-cap, a veil falling below her waist, and a tunic with which her puce silk spencer made a startling contrast. Others, again, adhered to the transparent costume, with shoes sandalled high up on the leg.

It was difficult to tell from the appearance of these ladies whether they were Greek, Turkish, or French women. The over-transparency of their attire gave rise to the following song, by Despréaux, in eight verses, of which I transcribe the first only :—

“ Grâce à la mode
 On n’a plus d’cheveux (*bis*) ;
 Ah ! qu’c’est commode !
 On n’a plus d’cheveux
 On dit qu’c’est mieux !”⁵

³ “What is the price, mamma, of those ugly caps ?”

“Ten francs.” “The name ?” “Madwoman’s caps.”

“Ah, that is strange,” interrupted Nicolle,

“For all our ladies wear them.”

⁴ The author relates an anecdote here to which justice cannot be done in English, as the play upon words cannot be translated. The anecdote is as follows : “Une dame, ayant perdu son sac, voulut le faire afficher. ‘Fi donc !’ lui dit un mauvais plaisant, ‘faire afficher un ridicule, quand on en a tant !’”

⁵ “Thanks to the Fashion

No one has any hair (*bis*) ;

O ! how convenient !

No more hair,

They say it is better so !”

The fashions of the Directory, especially the transparent dresses, remained in favour during the early part of the Consulate. We may mention the following novelties: Jewish tunics in organdy muslin or silk, light or dark blue, buff or striped; drawn bonnets in organdy, and straw bonnets with “chicorée” trimming.

Long hair was a thing of the past; every woman wore her hair “à la Titus,” and covered the cropped skull with false hair, “cache-folies,” or “tortillons.”





Directory

HISTORY OF FASHION

Empire
1804

Colman imp. No. 12

CHAPTER XXI.

REIGN OF NAPOLEON I.

1804 TO 1814.

Fashions under the Empire—Sacks—"Personnes cossues"—A saying of Napoleon's—White gowns—Valenciennes lace—Ball dresses; walking dresses—Polish "toquets" and bonnets—Turbans—Muslins—Artificial flowers—Wenzel's manufactory; "The Offspring of Imposture," Camponon's verses—Parisian ladies, as sketched by Horace Vernet—Stays—Cashmeres—Protest by Piis—Ternaux assists in establishing the manufacture of cashmere shawls in France—Cotton stuffs—Richard Lenoir; importance of the Rouen manufacture—Violets during the Hundred Days—The "eighteen folds," and white silk.

UNDER the Empire, which was proclaimed in 1804, the fashion of short waists continued in favour, and even developed into extraordinary results. The fair sex adopted "sack" dresses, with the waist close under the arms, and the bosom pushed up to the chin. This was far from graceful, and a woman needed to be perfectly beautiful to look well in such a costume.

Gold, precious stones, and diamonds were lavishly used. Numerous balls were given, and official receptions held, and the dress of the women was handsome, nay, even magnificent. Unfortunately, it was chiefly remarkable for its bad taste. A Frenchwoman seemed to have attained the height of glory when it could be said of her: "*Voilà une personne cossue!*"¹

Napoleon wished his court to be splendid, and was accustomed to rebuke ladies who committed the sin of economy.

"Madame la Maréchale," said he one day to a lady, "your cloak is superb; I have seen it a good many times."

She took the hint. Extravagance prevailed in every class of society, we might almost say "By order."

Towards the same period, Gérard's picture of Love and Psyche

¹ "There's a warm, substantial person."

brought pallor into fashion. Rouge was altogether abolished, white pearl-powder was universally used, and women tried to be interesting by making up their faces "à la Psyché."

This departure from the ways of the eighteenth century did not prevent Frenchwomen from continuing to borrow some few fashions from foreign countries and other times, viz. Palatines from the north, Falbalas from the reign of Louis XV., and some minor accessories from Spain, Italy, Turkey, and England.

For the most part women wore fronts instead of their own hair, and diamonds in place of flowers. They were above all anxious to show off their wealth. Many of them were parvenues who sought to do honour to their husbands' position.

Yet the white gowns with spiral trimming of pink satin, and a wreath of brightly coloured flowers round the bottom of the skirt, must have been pretty. The bodice was fastened on the shoulders by many-coloured ribbons, and trimmed at the neck with Valenciennes lace of great cost. The bare arms were covered with long white gloves; round the throat was a necklace of real pearls, and on the hair, worn in curls, a wreath of roses.

Such a dress as the above was for ball-room wear; the skirt was short, revealing the ankle and foot in a white satin shoe.

Walking costumes were much the same as to shape, with the exception of the skirt, which was very long. They were much heavier by reason of the kerchief round the neck, and the shawl covering the shoulders. Dresses were worn "à la Jean de Paris," an opera by Boïeldieu; the hair was dressed "à la Chinoise," with gold pins, from which hung little gold balls.

With the same style of hair, the "cap-bonnet," trimmed with feathers, was fastened under the chin with silk strings. There were toquets of embroidered tulle, and hats "à la Polonaise," of a somewhat ungraceful square shape; turbans also in clear muslin spotted with gold, and turban-caps, both souvenirs of the Napoleonic victories in Egypt. How many fine ladies resembled Mamelukes!

Some women wore cloth, merino, or velvet coats; and almost all excessively short waists. Their gowns were indecently low.

High gowns made without fulness were frequently trimmed with many rows of flounces or falbalas.

From the beginning of the century, the manufacture of muslin, which is said to be so named from the town of Mossoul, had been greatly developed at Tarare and St. Quentin.

In addition to this, the principal innovation of the period was the definitive introduction of artificial flowers, which, until then, had only been occasionally employed in feminine attire.

The Italians had long possessed the art of producing artificial flowers, and had practised it with great success; but in France this branch of industry had only been introduced in the year 1738. A man named Séguin, a native of Mende, and a very clever chemist and botanist, succeeded in manufacturing artificial flowers quite equal to those of Italy. He also made them after the Chinese method, from the pith of the elder-tree; and he was the first to invent a sort of flower made of silver-leaf, which has been much used to ornament feminine attire.

Wenzel, a maker of artificial flowers in various materials, who received an award at the Industrial Exhibition in 1802, sold very admirable specimens of his art, and greatly contributed to the success of artificial flowers when employed for the dress or hair. Flowers were worn mingled with braids of false hair.

Philippe de la Renaudière dubbed these "the offspring of imposture." Campenon, in his "*Maison des Champs*," exclaimed,—

"Où, loin des champs, il est une autre Flore,
Que l'art fait naître et que Paris adore . . .
Sur ces bouquets méconnus des zéphirs,
Un pinceau sûr adroitement dépose
L'or du genêt, le carmin de la rose,
Ou de l'iris nuance les saphirs ;
Puis on les voit dans nos folles orgies,
Au sein des bals, loin des feux du soleil,
S'épanouir aux rayons des bougies.
L'art applaudit à leur éclat vermeil ;
Mais sur ces fleurs, enfants d'une autre Flore,
Je cherche en vain les pleurs d'une autre Aurore."²

² "Yes, far from fields there is another Flora,
Born of art, and adored by Paris . . .

The art of flower-making has made some progress since 1738 and 1802, and it may be said that artificial flowers are indispensable to an elegant costume.

The Empire was the period of "toquets" in embroidered tulle.

Horace Vernet, the great painter, although very young in 1813, has portrayed "Les Dames de Paris" in the reign of the first Napoleon. Nothing seems to us more hideous than their hats and feathers, their sleeves tight to the wrist, and the embroidery on their gowns.

Mme. de Staël's "Corinne" turned the heads of the fair sex in 1807 and 1808. They assumed an inspired expression, fancied themselves on Italian shores, played on the harp, and wore scarfs that floated with every breeze.

The fashions of the Empire have been much, yet on one important point, perhaps, not sufficiently criticized. We allude to the use of stays, which came in with the winter of 1809, and have held their place ever since, in spite of all the sarcasm that has been lavished on those mechanical aids to dress. By way of compensation, the Empire gave us Cashmere shawls, first brought into France at the time of our Egyptian expedition (1798—1802). Previously to that, Tippoo-Saïb had included shawls among the gifts he had sent to Louis XVI.; but they were not generally worn until later. Piis wrote the following lines on the subject:—

" D'ailleurs, ces schalls si solides,
Que vous portez à l'envi,
A des Arabes perfides
De ceintures ont servi.

Upon nosegays of which zephyrs know nothing,
A skilful brush lays cunningly
The gold of the gorse, the carmine of the rose,
Or the sapphire tints of the iris;
And then we see them, amid our orgies,
In the ball-room, far from the sun-rays,
Bloom in the glare of the wax lights.
Art applauding their brilliancy;
But on those flowers, children of another Flora,
In vain I seek the tears of another Aurora."

Ah ! de ces tissus profanes
Comme à mon tour je rirai,
Si le goût des caravanes
Par eux vous est inspiré.”³

Cashmere shawls are so called from the capital of a province in Asia, within the territories of the Great Mogul. About 100,000 shawls were made yearly in Kashmir.

Guillaume Louis Ternaux was the first to imitate the famous Indian shawls, and then conceived the idea of naturalizing in France the Thibet goats, whose hair had hitherto been exclusively employed in their manufacture. For this purpose, and at great cost, he despatched M. Joubert, of the National Library, who was well acquainted with the Oriental tongues, to Thibet. M. Joubert gathered together a flock of 1500 goats, only 256 of which reached France, and were distributed over the southern provinces. Thanks to Ternaux, Cashmere shawls have become one of the most splendid adornments of feminine dress. On their first appearance they delighted both Paris and the provinces. Their marvellous texture, consisting principally of the soft hair of acclimatized Thibet goats, elicited universal admiration.

At first no French manufacturer ventured to imitate so delicate a tissue, such extraordinary lightness, such curious patterns; but after a time an attempt was made to reproduce Thibet cashmeres by means of cotton, silk, and wool, which, however, were found to be wanting in softness. At a later period the hair of Kirghis goats from Russia was successfully employed, and thus a sufficient softness was obtained for the “French cashmeres.”

The sway of cashmeres has its vicissitudes and lapses. For awhile they vanish from the scene, and then, after an interval, they regain their well-deserved place in the public esteem. When an

³ “ Besides, those heavy shawls
Which you delight in wearing,
Have previously served for girdles
To perfidious Arabs.
Ah ! at those profane fabrics
I should laugh in my turn,
If in theirs they inspired you
With the taste of the caravans.”

occasion arises on which very grand and imposing attire is required a woman of fashion buys one of those splendid products of the Indies.

At solemn family gatherings, a cashmere is indispensable ; it proclaims the wealth of the wearer.

The cotton manufactures of France were of little importance until 1787, in which year the Government set up spinning machinery at Rouen ; but the manufacture began to flourish only under the First Empire, when the energy of Richard Lenoir contributed greatly to its success. From the time that machinery was substituted for the old spinning-wheel, an amount of labour which formerly employed a thousand spinners could be accomplished by a mere child.

For more than sixty years the coloured cottons manufactured at Rouen, and called in consequence " Rouenneries," have served to clothe the majority of Frenchwomen.

During the Hundred Days, succeeding the return of Napoleon from Elba, violets became the fashion. They were regarded as a political emblem. From May 20, 1815, no Imperialist lady appeared in public without a large bunch of violets on her breast. Some morning caps were trimmed with violets and immortelles side by side, and several jewellers manufactured ornaments of the same design. On the other hand, the Royalist ladies wore jaconet gowns with eighteen tucks in the skirt, in honour of Louis XVIII., and bonnets of white silk striped with plaited straw, a small square cashmere shawl with a vermilion border, and dark blue prunella boots.



Restoration
1815

HISTORY OF FASHION

Restoration
1830



CHAPTER XXII.

REIGNS OF LOUIS XVIII. AND CHARLES X.

1815 TO 1830.

Importation of foreign fashions in 1815—White dresses, white feathers, and fleurs de lys—Emigrant ladies—Russian toques—Male and female dressmakers—Ruchings—Short sleeves and long gloves—Herbault's bonnets—"Chefs"—Anglomania in 1815—Green gauze veils; spencers—The "canezou"—Lacroix, the stay-maker—Dr. Pelletan and Charles X.—Wasps—The "Ourika" fashions—The famous leg-of-mutton sleeves—Fashions "à l'Ipsiboé," "au Trocadéro," and "à la Dame Blanche"—Blonde caps and turbans—Head-dresses—Fashions "à la giraffe;" "the last sigh of Jocko"—Female book-keepers; shopwomen—The Café des Mille-Colonnes.

THE lamentable presence of the allied armies in our capital induced us to adopt some fashions from abroad. Our countrywomen copied certain details of dress from the Germans, the Poles, the Russians, and the English. They professed to "find good in everything," quite forgetting the claims of patriotism.

The noble ladies who returned from emigration in 1815 could not reconcile themselves to the fashions of new France, and the shape of gowns and hats became almost an affair of state. The Legitimists, when once they had recrossed the frontier, endeavoured to repudiate whatever could remind them, nearly or remotely, of the Republic and the Empire.

The fashions of 1815 were, generally speaking, influenced by the changes effected by the Restoration in France. The white flag floated from the dome of the Tuileries, and there was a passion for white gowns; while feathers of the same hue waved on the heads of women, in honour, no doubt, of the heroic white plumes that Henri IV. "bore along the path of honour." More than one great lady at the court of Louis XVIII. trimmed the edge of her skirt with a wreath of lilies, while she altered but little the shape of her gown,

which remained as short waisted as under Napoleon I. In the early part of January, 1816, a wealthy foreigner appeared at the opera wearing a Russian toque. She created quite a sensation; and the next day a first-rate milliner of the Rue Vivienne had reproduced the head-dress, which soon afterwards was universally worn.

There was a general craving for splendid dress. Enthusiastic Royalists gathered round Louis XVIII. and the Comte d'Artois, and thronged the apartments of the Tuileries. Nothing was thought of in the Faubourg St. Germain but balls, concerts, and entertainments. A great revival took place in trade, and served as the general excuse for extravagance.

In a very short time Paris possessed four renowned ladies' tailors, thirteen milliners in large practice, seven noted florists, three favourite stay-makers, eight famous dressmakers, and eight excellent ladies' shoemakers.

White gowns, trimmed at the bottom with flowers, were generally worn both at official and private balls. Flowers, roses for the most part, were worn in the hair. Plaid dresses were in fashion, dresses "*à l'indolente*," and dresses trimmed with chinchilla.

Dresses were made in various styles. Sometimes sleeves were short and puffed, and trimmed with several rows of ruching; and sometimes they were funnel-shaped, that is, there was a certain amount of fulness at the shoulder which gradually diminished as they reached the wrist, where they were hermetically closed by a ribbon over a coloured kid glove.

Dresses were cut "low," and necklaces of pearls or garnets were worn. When the sleeves were short, long gloves concealed the arm, and the effect was very pretty. Embroidered "*toques*" were also in fashion, ornamented with pearls and a wreath of marabout feathers.

Long gloves were expensive; but no well-dressed woman hesitated to put on a new pair every day, a soiled glove not being admissible. Tan was a favourite colour.

Valuable jewels, wide bright-coloured sashes, delicate fans, and embroidered or braided reticules completed the attire, and gave it character as well as intrinsic worth. Married women wore little

half-handkerchiefs tied round the throat, and young girls wore apron-dresses (*tablier-robés*) entirely in white.

The hair was arranged in little curls close round the forehead and temples, and in small rolls at the back of the head. Artificial flowers were used, but sparingly.

Bonnets were made without curtains, and were worn rather tilted forward over the face, so as to display the chignon and neck; they were trimmed with artificial flowers. Large chip hats and white feathers were purchased at Herbault's, who also sold small white satin ones, the brims of which were cut into points or squares, and surmounted with marabouts. Other milliners manufactured "*cornettes*" in black velvet, edged with white tulle; they even placed black hats on white "*cornettes*."

Many dresses were made of fine white merino, with wide stripes of dead silver, called "*chefs*." White merino boots, laced at the side, completed the costume.

During the first few years of the Restoration our fair countrywomen indulged in various successive caprices. The "*Journal des Modes*" from 1814 to 1815 holds up the most extraordinary fashions to our admiration. Women, moreover, were seized with Anglomania. A caricature of the time represents "*Mme. Grognard*" trying to force her daughter to dress herself "*à l'Anglaise*."

The young girl replies,—

"Gracious! how frightful! What dreadful taste! To think of wearing English fashions!"

But, criticism notwithstanding, ladies adopted the English custom of straw bonnets and green gauze veils. They wore spencers, a garment resembling a jacket with the skirts cut off a little below the waist. These were generally made of velvet, reps, or satin, and in every colour. They wrapped themselves in green kerseymere cloaks with double collars, in merino coats, and in silk "*douillettes*," or wadded gowns.

But imperceptibly, and because good taste never altogether cedes its rights, puffings and heavy trimmings were discarded, and the "*canezou*," a sort of sleeveless bodice, superseded the spencer.

Muslin canezous were becoming to most women, setting off the figure of both young and old.

Unfortunately Frenchwomen soon returned to the ungraceful leg-of-mutton sleeves, and sleeves "à berêt," "à la folle," "à l'imbécile," and "à l'éléphant." Every day brought forth some new thing, of more or less wonderful shape.

Cambric chemises were beautifully embroidered and trimmed with narrow Valenciennes round the neck and sleeves. An embroidered jaconet gown cost as much as 900 francs. And this did not discourage, but, indeed, promoted prodigality in the purchase of stockings and pocket-handkerchiefs.

For full-dress mourning, black "toques" were worn, embroidered in bronzed steel with a plume of black feathers, and black gowns were similarly embroidered.

Stays were costly, and remained in fashion. Those of Lacroix, a very good maker, cost one hundred francs; they were made in two pieces, and a small cushion covered with white silk was fastened on behind to give elegance to the shape.¹

Jean Jacques Rousseau was laughed at for writing, that "The limbs should be free beneath the garments covering them; nothing should interfere with their action, nothing should fit too closely to the body; there should be no ligatures." Far from following his advice, women generally wore steel busks in their stays. And yet the celebrated Dr. Pelletan, after making many experiments in the interests of hygiene and dress, had proved that the use of busks was highly dangerous. They attracted electricity to the chest, and might occasion internal irritation in that region.

Charles X. placed himself among the opponents of stays. "Formerly," said he, "it was not uncommon to see Dianas, Venuses, or Niobes in France; but now we see nothing but wasps."

In 1824, the Duchesse de Duras brought out her romance, "Ourika," which was already known and admired at court, at the Royal Printing House, as if it were a scientific work. It was received with rapture by the general public, and was spoken of

¹ The familiar "bustle," of course.

as the "Atala of the Salons." There were "Ourika" bonnets, caps, and gowns, Ourika shawls, and a colour called Ourika.

This sort of passing enthusiasm recurred very frequently; and no sooner had a book or a circumstance obtained the notice of the public, than it received consecration, as it were, from the fashionable world. From 1822 to 1830 the following colours were in fashion: "Ipsiboé," "Trocadéro," "bronze," "smoke," "Nile-water," "solitary," "reed," "mignonette-seed," "amorous toad," "frightened mouse," "spider meditating crime," &c.

The eighteenth century seemed to have come back, in the matter of designations at any rate.

A paroxysm of splendid extravagance was occasioned by the coronation of Charles X.

Hair-dressers travelled post to Rheims for the ceremony, and were besieged by their fair clients. During the night preceding the coronation, one of them dressed the hair of more than five and twenty ladies, at a charge of forty francs apiece.

We must not content ourselves with a mere mention of leg-of-mutton sleeves, they deserve a longer notice, by reason of their own long and absolute reign.

Leg-of-mutton sleeves first appeared in 1820, and attained by degrees to such enormous size, that a woman of fashion could not pass through a door of ordinary dimensions. They were kept in shape by whalebones, or by a sort of balloon stuffed with down.

Such a sleeve exactly resembled the joint of meat from which it took its name. An extraordinary fashion, indeed! It is hard to understand the "good taste" that presided at its invention.

And yet the whole dress of woman soon became centred, as it were, in the leg-of-mutton sleeve. There could be nothing to harmonize in the rest of a costume, with sleeves that preponderated as much as the paniers of old, and the steel crinolines of twenty-five years ago. We can but laugh when we examine some portraits of the period.

There were some slight changes in the fashions in the reign of Charles X., from 1824 to 1830, attributable generally to incidents of the day, or to popular plays or novels. Colours,

crape, head-dresses, and turbans were named after "Ipsiboé," a romance of passion by the Vicomte d'Arlincourt; there were Trocadéro ribbons, in honour of the Duc d'Angoulême's campaign in Spain; "Elodie" blue, and Scotch plaids "à la Dame Blanche," after Boïeldieu's fine opera; and extraordinary whimsicalities, "à la wonderful lamp," "à l'Emma," "à la Marie Stuart," and "à la Clochette." Bonnets with large hollow brims, feathers and ribbons, Sultana turbans, "berêts," and caps of Chantilly blond, were still worn.

Numbers of fashionable women wore a "sentiment" round their throats, or a "carcan necklace" of velvet, or bows either of fur or curled feathers. Gowns barely reached to the ankles; they were trimmed with gauze, blond, bows of ribbon, bands of velvet, twists of satin; feather-fringe and ornaments were sewn on to the material.

The short skirts of 1828 caused the boots we had copied from the English to be appreciated; they were both comfortable and sightly.

Velvet "toques" were in favour; likewise velvet "witchouras," chinchilla muffs, bodices draped "à la Sévigné;" satin bonnets trimmed with marabouts, satin pelisses lined with swans'-down; satin gowns covered with crape, trimmed with puffings of the same, roses and pearl wheat-ears, invented by Mme. Hippolyte; merino gowns trimmed with satin, Moabitish turbans in crape lisse with gold stripes and a plume of feathers, and, lastly, scarfs in barège-cashmere.

The hair was arranged in plaits, or high, stiff curls, on the top of the head, mixed with ribbons and flowers, or with curled feathers "invented by M. Plaisir," or a steel comb.

To these we may add sashes of China crape and gauze, belts of hair, morocco leather baskets, diamond waist-buckles, morocco bags shaped like pocket-books or shells, stamped leather bags, lace mantillas, plaid and damask satin parasols, and terry velvet over-shoes lined with fur.

In 1827, France possessed for the first time a living giraffe. The animal had been sent to Charles X. by the Pacha of Egypt, and was placed in the Jardin des Plantes.

The giraffe became extraordinarily popular. Never before had the Jardin des Plantes attracted so many visitors; crowds of sight-seers rushed to see it eat or walk about, and for several months it engrossed the whole attention of the public. Dramatic authors constantly alluded to the giraffe in their pieces, and the street organs continually repeated the tunes that had been composed in its honour.

Then Fashion took it up, and created gowns "à la giraffe," sashes "à la giraffe," bonnets "à la giraffe," &c.; and dress was so contrived as to immortalize the gift of the Pacha of Egypt.

On the arrival of a chimpanzee in Paris the same results occurred; and when poor Jocko had expired, the ladies honoured his memory by wearing materials named "Jocko's last sigh."

Our task would be a long and tedious one were we to attempt to describe the costume of the lemonade-seller during the Restoration, that of the jeweller's or goldsmith's assistant, of the "lingère," the florist, the confectioner, &c., in a word, of all the "bourgeoises" whose station was behind a counter or at the book-keeper's desk.

Each of these adopted a costume appropriate to her business. The wonderful costume of the lemonade-seller of the Palais Royal excited the admiring envy of the ladies of the court, and as for the "cafetière" of the "Mille-Colonnes," a fashionable hair-dresser expended all his art in her service, just as if he had been devoting his "genius" to the head of an illustrious princess.

The Duchesse de Berry would fain have been a leader of fashion during the Restoration, but she never succeeded in the attempt.





Louis-Philippe
1832 to 1837



HISTORY OF FASHION



Louis-Philippe
1842 to 1846

L. Goussier

CHAPTER XXIII.

REIGN OF LOUIS PHILIPPE.

1830 TO 1848.

The Revolution of July, 1830—Fashions in Louis Philippe's reign—Microscopical bonnets, called "bibis," "cabriolets"—Variety of caps—Fashions of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance—The stage—Historic costumes—Influence of Rachel, the actress—Greek and Roman fashions—Colours—Various designations of materials—Bedouin sleeves—Bonnets and head-dresses—Pamela bonnets—Novel eccentricities—Taglioni gowns, gathered "à la Vierge," laced "à la Niobé," &c.—The "Sylvestrine"—Costumes to be worn on occasions of attempts on the king's life—Bouquets for balls.

THE Revolution of July 1830 did not produce nearly so much effect on dress as that of 1789.

In the reign of Louis Philippe, as in that of Charles X., feminine costume changed but little. Fanciful adjuncts of dress succeeded one another without interruption, but the basis of dress in general remained the same. Microscopical "bibis" took the place of the enormous bonnets that under the name of "cabriolets" had been the delight of Parisian ladies in 1835; and dress-caps were manufactured in a variety of shapes, and under a variety of names, viz. the Charlotte Corday, the peasant, the nun, the Elizabeth, the châtelaine, the Marie Antoinette, the polka, &c. But the only striking novelties were the nets "à la Napolitaine," the "steeple-chase" rosettes placed below the ears, the Armenian toques "à pentes" (or sloping), the Catalan half-caps, the fringed Algerian head-dresses, and the white and gold Jewish turbans with strings "à la Rachel." These turbans were taken from Mdlle. Falcon's stage dress in Halévy's opera of "La Juive."

The greatest novelty consisted in the colours chosen for dress. The "Snow" head-dress was named after Auber's work; gowns "à la Dame Blanche," after that of Boieldieu; and caps "à la

Fiancée," also after Auber. To these succeeded various colours, called "Solitaire," from Carafa, or the "Petites Danaïdes," and "Robin des Bois." Dark and sober tints were worn in preference to brighter hues, for no other reason than the romantic ideas of a period in which both men and women delighted in appearing melancholy, Byronic, and sickly.

The effect of the Romantic School on Fashion may be easily imagined. The early works of Victor Hugo and Lamartine had kindled the popular imagination, while Scott's novels and Byron's poems had everywhere fostered ideal sentiments.

Reveries, suffering, sacrifice, and boundless self-devotion were the themes of the day, and fair ladies voluntarily shed tears, because to weep was fashionable.

I, the writer of these lines, have known many young girls quite distressed by their healthy appearance, their rosy cheeks, and fresh complexions. "It looked so common," they said. As if the brilliant colouring of nature were not the incomparable source of all beauty. More than one young girl who longed to look consumptive, ended by becoming so in reality, by dint of depriving herself of proper nourishment, which she feared might make her grow stout and "material."

The return to the Middle Ages was likewise manifested by numerous costumes taken from the periods of which we treated at the beginning of this history.

Who is that lady? Is she the Châtelaine of Coucy? She wears a long train, an enormous pearl necklace, and hanging sleeves like those of Marguerite of Burgundy; the alms-bag suspended from her waist, and her carved jewellery, make her resemble a woman of the fourteenth century. Not so, however. She is the wife of a rich shopkeeper, and has been present at the performances of plays by Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas.

Does not that other fair lady belong to the court of Charles VI.? No; you make a mistake. She has only insisted on her milliner dressing her like Mdlle. Georges in her stage dress of Isabeau de Bavière, the principal character in the play of "Perrinet Leclerc."

Not only the public resorts of Longchamps and the Tuilleries, but the French and Italian Opera Houses, the Opera Comique, the Théâtre-Français, and the large theatres of the Boulevards exercise the greatest influence at the present day over the caprices of Fashion. An extraordinary discrepancy exists between the character of women and the garments they choose to wear. A sweet and gentle girl has her hair dressed like that of the infanticide Norma, and the best of mothers seeks to imitate the costume of that arch-poisoner, the Marquise de Brinvilliers.

Masked and fancy-dress balls were crowded with historical characters, from Frédégonde to Mary Stuart, and from Catherine de Médicis to Charlotte Corday. The Greek and Roman styles were replaced by those of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

We find the following paragraph in a Review of 1834: "Fashions, like Empires, have their Revolutions, which in former times were slow and gradual; but at the present day they follow the spirit of the age, and share in its instability. Each century was formerly stamped in the same image, and the dress of our forefathers might have served, in a certain sense, to mark the dates of our history. But at the present day, Fashion, greedily seeking after novelty, appeals to every era and every period, borrowing from each, and only takes possession of one costume in order to throw it aside for another, in a few months, or weeks, or even days."

Meanwhile the great actress, Rachel, revived the ancient tragedies. She played successively Emilia, Hermione, Eriphyla, Monima, Electra, Roxana, Paulina, Agrippina, and Phædra, and by her genius gave new life to masterpieces that had been almost forgotten, if not despised, since Talma ceased to interpret them.

Thereupon the ladies of the Faubourg St. Germain and those of the Chaussée d'Antin became fired with enthusiasm; not only did they invite Rachel to their salons, where she recited the imprecation of Camilla or the dream of Athalia, but they copied the dress of the illustrious tragedian. If Rachel wore a bracelet of artistic design, other ladies immediately tried to procure similar ornaments; or if on another occasion she displayed a set of magnificent

cameos, they too must possess cameos of the same kind. They copied the great actress in the minutest detail of her costume, and even in her most characteristic head-dress.

The Romantic School was succeeded by that of "good sense," according to the admirers of Ponsard; and Emile Augier's "Ciguë" produced a temporary revival of the taste for Greek and Roman fashions.

But the reaction against the Middle Ages did not reach the "bourgeois" classes, who, when their "romanticist" costumes were worn out, replaced them with others of a less striking style, and better adapted to modern life.

With regard to the colours most generally worn during the reign of Louis Philippe, we may mention Russian green, wine-lees, Marengo black, and pure Ethiopian, as succeeding to the delightful hues of lilac, pigeon-breast, and "early dawn."

And by how many extraordinary designations were the new materials known! How charming was that of *pou de soie*, or *pou de la reine*!¹

Never had there been such a variety of nomenclature! The most wonderful appellations were bestowed either by the manufacturers or the vendors of the new materials, and the public seriously accepted and made use of the pretentious newly-invented words, at which sensible people could but smile.

To "diamantines" were added "constellées," and to "Venus's hair" succeeded "butterflies' wings." How poetical! what romantic garments!

We are omitting to mention the tricolour materials, that made a momentary appearance from time to time, when patriotism happened to be awakened by some victory over the tribes of Algeria.

Besides poetical names, there were others less agreeable, but accepted universally nevertheless. It sounded odd to compliment a lady on her Bedouin sleeves, or her busked or loosely-laced bodice!

Head coverings underwent singular changes. The "bibi" was

¹ Silk louse. Queen's louse.

suddenly transformed into the "cabas," with a deep crown concealing the neck; and the next season brought in Pamela bonnets, with rounded brims, that very prettily revealed the outlines of the cheeks. The hair was, generally speaking, arranged in curls on each side, and in large rolls held by a comb at the back of the head.

Almost all family portraits of that date represent the hair arranged thus, and adorned either with feathers or more frequently with artificial flowers, such as are still worn. Great perfection had been attained in the manufacture of roses, geraniums, nymphaeas, chrysanthemums, camelias, and many other lovely flowers, to enliven the attire of women.

The most fashionable style of dress in 1830 was as follows:—Gowns either high or low, with or without capes; long sleeves with wristbands, or short sleeves and long gloves; bodice with or without a waistband, and generally worn with an embroidered collar; scarf and parasol of some dark tint; black prunella or Turkish satin shoes; no trimmings to the gown, but red or flame-coloured ribbon bows scattered here and there; and necklaces composed of two rows of pearls.

But we must not imagine that this was all, and that capriciousness and the love of change can ever abdicate their throne. The "leg-of-mutton," the "berêt," the "imbecile," and the "elephant" sleeves were succeeded by others not quite so eccentric, but still, for the most part, sufficiently extraordinary.

Such were the "Venetian," the "Louis XIII.," the "nun's," the "Turkish," the "Bedouin," the "Persian," the "gardener's," the "Sevigné," the "Dubarry" sleeves, &c. I omit some of the strangest. Henry the Second's narrow-brimmed hats with curled feathers came again into fashion, and the ladies adopted enthusiastically collars and "guimpes" à la Médicis, and mantles "à la vieille"² or "à la paysanne."³

It would be an endless task to enumerate the slight but very various developments of fashion. Yet I must mention the "Taglioni gowns," consisting of four skirts; nor can I omit

² Old woman.

³ Peasant woman.

speaking of "berthes" of blond, "Célimènes," Pompadour bodices, Niobe lacings, plaitings "à la Vierge," Grecian and pointed bodices, &c.

Numberless new materials were produced; among them were "droguet catalan," "lampas burgrave," "Polar star," "blossoming chameleon," "casimirienne," "palmyrienne"—a blue ground brocaded with gold, "Benvenuto Cellini" blue velvet, "Medici" and "Louis XV." satins, "tulle illusion," "Rachel" crape, "cameline" silk, a tissue called "fil de la Vierge," "polka" gauze, and, lastly, "Duchess" and "Fleur de Marie" pocket-handkerchiefs.

In 1839 a manufacturer invented "sylvestrine," a material composed of the thinnest possible layers of wood; these formed the surface of a light and flexible sheet of pasteboard. Another invented a material of spun glass.

Great ladies delighted in lace. The wedding gown of the Princess Hélène, Duchesse d'Orléans, was of Alençon point, and cost thirty thousand francs.

How many different names have since then appeared in the Calendar of Fashion! Each recurring season has witnessed the birth and death of something new in head-dresses or dress materials, or some fanciful caprice or new shape in garments.

The beautiful Mme. de Sampajo, the attached friend of Louis Philippe and his family, was enumerating, on one occasion, all the costumes she provided herself with at the beginning of each year.

"I was forgetting," she said, "to mention my dress for the days on which the king or his family are fired at. . . ."

It is a fact that regicides abounded under the Monarchy of July; and as often as Louis Philippe escaped unhurt from some attempt on his life, ladies would hastily dress themselves in some simply shaped, dark-coloured costume, and present themselves at the Tuileries, to offer him their congratulations.

Such costumes were always kept in readiness in a wardrobe, and were known as "costumes for days on which the king's life is attempted."

In the annals of fashion, the reign of Louis Philippe is re-

markable only for “romantic costume” at first, and afterwards for the “classical costume” inspired by Rachel. It must not be inferred, however, that the reign of Fancy had ceased to exist. Many trifles, light and fragile as roses, exist like roses, for one day only. And every woman is the willing slave of Fashion, however extraordinary it may be, so that by dressing like others, she may avoid the appearance of singularity.

A sort of rivalry existed in 1834, concerning bouquets for balls. Five or six camelias, mixed with green leaves, were placed in the centre of a pyramidal nosegay consisting of violets, ferns, and small hot-house flowers. These bouquets were placed in a gilt or jewelled holder, to which was attached a ring and chain; the bouquet, therefore, might be allowed to fall, and would yet remain suspended to the finger.



CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SECOND REPUBLIC.

1848 TO 1851.

Tricoloured stuffs of 1848—Girondin mantles—Open gowns—Summer dresses—Kasawecks and their derivatives—Beaver bonnets; velvet bonnets, and satin or crape drawn bonnets—Cloches, Cornelia, Moldavian, and Josephine cloaks; mantles—Isly green—Opera cloaks—Numerous styles of dressing the hair: à la Marie Stuart, à la Valois, Leda, Proserpine, and Ceres—Marquise parasols—Jewellery—Straw bonnets—"Orleans" and "armure"—Work reticule or bag—"Chinés"—Pagoda sleeves—Waistcoats; basque bodices—New and economical canezous.

THE Revolution of 1848 lasted too short a time to effect a change in dress. There is little to remark in that transient period, beyond the adoption of tricoloured materials in remembrance of 1830. Tricoloured ribbons were worn on caps, and on a few bonnets. For some months Girondin cloaks, with three rows of shaded lace, were in fashion; the cloaks were of muslin, and trimmed with frills worked in button-hole stitch. Bronze was the favourite colour for mantles.

The year 1848 was like its forerunner. The same materials, the same bodices, and the same sleeves continued to be worn. Small mantles called "grandmother," and others, shawl-shaped, with little sleeves and three flounces, and others again, rounded behind, and trimmed with fringe or deep lace, were fashionable.

Gowns were made open in front, with low square-cut Raphael bodices, the front and back gathered; and Marie Stuart head-dresses were worn. As the light material of summer costumes was found trying to delicate persons, kasawecks or casaques, imported from Russia, were worn over them in the evening.

The kasaweck was a sort of jacket coming below the waist, with a tight-fitting back, and wide, braided sleeves. The fronts

were made loose, or to fit tight, according to taste. The Russian kasawecks were lined with fur, but ours were simply wadded. They were sometimes made of velvet and satin, but more frequently of cashmere or merino, and were occasionally worn under a shawl or mantle. They were known under several names, viz. "coin-du-feu," "casaque," "pardessus," &c.; and there was quite a series of kasawecks, i. e. home kasawecks, garden kasawecks, girls' kasawecks, grandmamma's kasawecks, &c. Women of fashion, however, never wore them out of their own house in the daytime.

For several years wide-brimmed beaver bonnets were generally worn. They were given up because they were very expensive, unsuitable for full dress, and soon lost their colour. Velvet bonnets succeeded them, trimmed with black lace or feathers, and drawn bonnets of satin or silk, or crape bonnets, on which were velvet heartsease, auriculas, or primroses.

Gowns, which remained about the same in shape, were cut more or less low, according as they were intended for morning or evening wear. Some were shorter than others; but fashion no longer allowed the ankle to be displayed as in 1829.

As regards material, the favourite woollens were cashmere, flannel, Glasgow cloth, and Amazon sateen; and in silks, plain or glacé, "satin à la reine," "pekin," "gros d'Afrique," &c.

An enumeration of all the cloaks, mantles, and pardessus would be tedious. But I must not omit to mention the bell-shaped, or Greek cloak, also called the "Cornelia," because its fulness and simplicity somewhat resembled the form of the Roman cloak. It had no sleeves and no seam on the shoulder, and could be gathered up over the arms like a shawl, at the pleasure of the wearer.

Another cloak, called the Moldavian, fell below the knee, the sleeves hung down wide at the back, and formed a square cape in front. We may also mention the double-cape beige cashmere mantle, edged with braid; the Josephine mantle, with one cape, and without shoulder-seam; and the shawl-mantle, the elegance of which depended chiefly on the trimming.

Black lace mantles were embellished by little ruchings of narrow lace, or by "frisettes," a sort of braid which formed a frill on each side of a silk thread running through its entire length.

Among the favourite colours of the period was Isly green, so named in honour of the great victory obtained by Marshal Bugeaud, in 1844, over the armies of the Emperor of Morocco. Women wore a great deal of Algerian finery, or at any rate, their dressmakers got ideas from the events taking place in the colony, and made use of them in their work.

"Sorties de bal," or opera cloaks, were much worn at the same period. There was no dearth of dancing parties in the winter of 1849-50, and the number of entertainments in Paris astonishes the historian who remembers the political events of that same year.

The Marie Stuart and the Valois head-dresses were both in fashion; the latter being adopted by young and pretty women who wished to be conspicuous. The hair when dressed in this style was drawn back from the brow, and rolled over a pad right round the forehead. The "Druid" head-dress was composed of oak leaves; the "Nereid," of all the flowers beloved by Naiads; the "Leda" consisted of little feathers of Barbary birds; the "Proserpine" of wild flowers, for this was Proserpine's mode before she was abducted by Pluto. Lastly, the "Ceres," consisting of the attributes of the genial goddess.

Long chains of large beads without clasps were worn round the neck, and reached to the waist; bracelets were of marcasite, enamel, diamonds, and cameos; velvet bands an inch or two in width were fastened closely round the throat.

On the first appearance of sunshine, ladies provided themselves, when about to take a walk or pay a visit, with small parasols, white, pink, or green. These were called "marquises," and were trimmed with broad lace.

Parasols were sometimes fashioned like small umbrellas, and were useful in case of a sudden shower. Soon afterwards they were bordered with a wreath of embroidered flowers, or with a satin stripe either of the same colour as the parasol, or blue or green on *écru*, or violet on white or buff.

Bouquets of jewellery for the breast were worn by only a few, on account of their cost. One was exhibited at the Industrial Exhibition of 1849, which, although of only ordinary size, and containing neither diamonds, nor other precious stones, was valued at seven thousand francs. We must add that this ornament could be altered at pleasure so as to form a tiara, a bracelet, or a necklace.

In order to defy the Paris mud, ladies wore high-heeled kid boots, and gaiters of lamb-skin, buttoning on the outer side.

Shoes were hardly seen except at balls, and were worn with beautiful hand-embroidered stockings, either of silk or Scotch thread.

Very pretty trinkets were manufactured in green enamel, or enamel, gold, and pearls, or blue oxydized silver. Cap pins and brooches were made with pendants, either of pearls or diamonds. Arabesques were greatly appreciated by women of artistic taste.

How numerous were the toilets of one single day! First a dressing-gown, then a costume for mass, another for walking, another for the evening, others for the theatre or a ball! And all these without counting wedding-gowns, or mourning attire, or the dress of young girls or children.

The great and typical novelty of 1850 was the introduction, first, of straw bonnets, and then of drawn bonnets. An endless variety were seen in places of fashionable resort. We need but enumerate the names of some of these: "paillassons," "sewn straws," "Belgian straws" with scalloped edges; and fancy straws in shell patterns, lozenges, &c.

This revived fashion of Italian straw bonnets lasted for several years. Women who could afford it, purchased expensive straws called "pailles de Florence" (Leghorns); the middle classes contented themselves, generally speaking, with sewn straws.

All these more or less expensive bonnets were trimmed with white ribbon, wheatears, cornflowers, and bows of ribbon or straw.

Drawn bonnets were especially becoming to young girls; they were made of crepe lisse or tulle, and trimmed with bands of Italian straw. Many were made of Mechlin net, of horsehair,

and of rice straw or chip. Black lace drawn bonnets were worn in general by women of a certain age.

We see that straw was approved of by every class, and in every station of life.

A woollen material, still in use at the present day, was first manufactured in 1850. It was called "Orleans," or "Orleance;" it was mixed and lustrous, was sometimes made in grey and black for half-mourning, and was principally used for gowns. "Armure," an autumn stuff, was a woollen mixture, grey, violet, or green, with satin stripes.

The bodices of walking-dresses were still made to open in a V shape, with wide frilled sleeves and tight under-sleeves, showing black velvet bracelets cleverly embroidered to represent coral.

Some magnificent dresses were made of "satin à la reine," brocaded with little "chiné" bouquets, and trimmed with flounces either of equal depth or graduated.

In 1850, also, a little hand-bag or workbox was invented, of real utility, containing various little articles on the inside of the lid, viz. a needle-case, an instrument for the nails, a bodkin, scissors, a button-hook, and crochet-hooks. The box itself held a thimble, a little pocket-book, a pencil, a looking-glass, and a pincushion. It would easily hold in addition, a purse, a handkerchief, a strip of embroidery or any other small piece of needlework, and reels of cotton. It was made in brown, black, or green leather, or in Russian leather lined with silk. Two leather straps made it very convenient to carry: it has been improved every succeeding year, and at the present day is in constant request.¹ "Bourgeoises" and working women have adopted it; and it is of great service to all housewives. This was the origin of our present admirably convenient travelling-bags.

The following was a pretty costume of the period. A green or blue silk gown shot with black, with two or three graduated flounces, each flounce braided in the Greek key pattern, with narrow black velvet ribbon. The basque bodice (for all kinds of basques were worn) was trimmed with velvet. A fine white

This was the well-known "Ladies' companion."

petticoat embroidered in open work was visible, if the dress were ever so little held up.

Silk was in such universal demand that fabulous prices were asked for it; and velvet was less esteemed than *moire antique*, or *brocades*, or *gros de Tours*, or *satin-striped chinés*, or *reps* with velvet bands, or watered *poplins*, or *Irish plaid poplins*.

Nevertheless, shop-girls and workwomen made every possible sacrifice in order to procure a silk gown, in place of the Rouen cottons formerly worn.

A decided improvement in colours came into fashion. Ladies perceived, or were beginning to perceive, that each should wear those shades most becoming to her, and that, while following the popular fashions of Longchamps, she should adapt her dress to her own face and figure.

The various styles of gowns, mantles, and bonnets continued to increase in number.

Chinés were very numerous; there were "*pastel chinés*," bouquet of roses *chinés*, *chinés* with patterns arranged apron-fashion, *chinés* with wreaths round the skirt, obelisk *chinés*, &c. Tall and slight persons wore as many as five flounces, the upper one being gathered in with the skirt at the waist.

Pagoda sleeves brought back velvet and ribbon bracelets; they might almost have been called armlets, for the wrist was entirely hidden by bows and ends. This was very becoming to thin persons: those with round, plump arms wore a plain piece of velvet and a buckle.

Handkerchiefs were bordered in button-hole stitch, and for full dress were embroidered and trimmed with lace, or were made of "*carré d'Angleterre*."

Gloves of kid and lambskin were so greatly in request, that the manufacturers raised the price on the pretext that "the massacre of the poor little animals did not supply the demand."

A few dressmakers revived the shaped sleeves terminated by a narrow wristband, and the "*mousquetaire*" or cavalier collars.

Waistcoats came into fashion in 1851, and were greatly worn under *basque* bodices; thus the ladies once more gave their

sanction to the garment worn by Gilles, a buffoon of the eighteenth century.

For morning wear, waistcoats were of black velvet, buttoning high to the throat; for afternoon, they were of embroidered silk, and had gilt buttons. For full dress, the buttons were of plain or chased gold, coral, turquoise, or garnet.

Canezous were very useful to wear with skirts that still retained their freshness. They were either bordered with button-hole stitch or with narrow lace. They were worn in summer. On the first sign of cold weather, muslin and gauze canezous gave way to jackets of thicker material.

Canezous were frequently worn by good managers, in order to utilize skirts whose bodices were partially worn out, and they were very economical.

We need not go further afield to account for the long duration of this fashion, both in town and country.





Second Republic. Napoleon III
1848 to 1860

HISTORY OF FASHION

Napoleon III
1860 to 1864

CHAPTER XXV.

REIGN OF NAPOLEON III.

1851 TO 1854.

Ready-made mantles—Talmas, mousquetaires, and rotondes—The Second Empire; reminiscences of the reign of Napoleon I.—Marriage of Napoleon III.; dress of the new empress; her hair dressed by Félix Escalier; court mantle and train—Four kinds of dress—Opera dress in 1853-4—Bodices “à la Vierge,” Pompadour bodices, and Watteau bodices—Skirt trimmings—A new colour, “Théba”—Light tints—Social and theatrical celebrities—The Eugénie head-dress and Mainnier bands—End of the first period of Imperial fashions.

DRESSMAKERS, like tailors, had begun to deal in ready-made garments; and found purchasers for their cloaks, mantles, and trimmed shawls. Special shops were established all over Paris, where customers might make selections from immense assortments of goods. Some of these houses have developed since then into monster bazaars.

A “Talma” was a cloth mantle, with or without a hood, and trimmed in various ways, and was a special favourite with ladies. Some other shapes were extremely simple. Talmas were also called “Cervantes,” or “Charles X.,” or “Valois,” or “Charles IX.”

The Talma clearly derived its origin from Spain. A cloak called “Andromache” was also worn; it recalled the fashions of Greece, and still more the stage triumphs of Rachel. So ineffaceable is the influence of genius!

Next came “Romeos,” “mousquetaires,” “Charles the Fifth’s,” and “rotondes.”

Mousquetaires were trimmed with velvet “chevrons,” and were fastened by tabs and large buttons. The others were all shaped like the talma, with a few unimportant variations.

On the establishment of the Second Empire, the fashions of the First were not immediately adopted, notwithstanding the prognosti-

cations of certain enthusiasts. We must note, however, that waists became shorter, and that reminiscences of the time of the Great Napoleon were perceptible in some of the accessories of dress, although they took no real root among us. Frenchwomen showed a reluctance to wear costumes that had been severely criticized in their hearing.

Many years were destined to pass by before any attempt should be made to revive the shapes of the First Empire.

The marriage of Napoleon III., however, gave a new impetus to feminine fashion, and every woman set herself to imitate as far as possible the style of dress worn by the Empress, now suddenly become the arbiter of attire.

The dress worn by the Emperor's bride at the marriage in the Cathedral of Notre Dame, was of white terry velvet, with a long train. The basque bodice was high, and profusely adorned with diamonds, sapphires, and orange-blossoms. The skirt was covered with "point d'Angleterre." This kind of lace had been selected on account of the veil, which it had been impossible to procure in "point d'Alençon." Félix Escalier dressed the new Empress's hair. There were two bandeaus in front; one was raised and peaked in the Marie Stuart shape, the other was rolled from the top of the head to the neck, where it fell in curls that, according to a poet, looked like "nests for Cupids."

This costume was long the subject of conversation in both aristocratic and bourgeois salons, especially among the adherents of the Imperial Régime.

We must say a few words concerning the court mantle, and the court train, which soon took its place in official attire.

The true court mantle falling from the shoulders was reserved, it is said, for the Empress, the princesses, and some few highly honoured ladies exclusively; for the Imperial Court wished to imitate exactly the magnificence displayed by Louis XIV., and the first ranks of Society became luxurious in the extreme.

A court train consisted of a skirt opening in front, but falling low at the sides, and ending in a long train. The train was attached to the waist. Ladies found it necessary to consult

a dancing-master in order to learn, not how to advance with a train, which was easy enough, but how to turn round, and especially how to retreat, which was extremely difficult.

Lappets were necessary for court dress; they fell to the waist, and were generally made of lace, and occasionally embroidered in gold or silver.

At full-dress assemblies, elegance and splendour of attire increased day by day; the most brilliant inventions in millinery succeeded each other uninterruptedly.

The first dressmakers in Paris were employed in making for the new Empress four series of gowns, if we may so describe them, viz. evening gowns, ball-dresses, visiting dresses, and morning gowns. Among those for "full dress" was one of pink *moire antique*; it had a basque bodice trimmed with fringe, lace, and white feathers; another was of green silk, the flounces trimmed with curled feathers; and a third of mauve silk, the flounces bordered with Brussels lace. All were made with basques, long-waisted, and either with trains or demi-trains rounded off. The bodices for the most part were draped.

However great the desire of many persons to see the fashions of the First Empire revived, those I have just described were certainly far from resembling them. Although waists were slightly shortened, the general aspect of dress retained the youthful, elegant, and slim effect which has always been, and will always remain, so creditable to the French taste.

The majority of ladies felt no temptation to recall the times of that *Maréchale Lefebvre*, who was as famous for her finery and feathers as for her singular choice of language and her extraordinary remarks. Nothing of the past can be enduring, except that which has succeeded.

During the winter of 1853-4, dresses were worn at the opera, of which I will describe one as a typical example.

The gown was of grey "*poult de soie*," the high bodice was fastened by ruby buttons, and the basques, open on the hips, were trimmed with a knot of cherry-coloured ribbon. The five flounces of the skirt were trimmed with ribbon of the same hue, laid on

flat, and terminating in bows with long ends. This was very unlike the dresses of 1810.

Bodices "à la Vierge," Pompadour and Watteau bodices with trimmings of lace, velvet, flowers, and ruched, quilled, or plain ribbon, were extremely fashionable. There was a certain grace about them.

On the whole, women greatly preferred the stomachers of the eighteenth century to the short waists of the first years of the nineteenth. They modelled themselves rather on the ancient order of things, than on the commencement of the new order, because above all they sought for pure and delicate outline.

The fashions of the reign of Louis the Eighteenth were resorted to for trimming the skirts of ball-dresses. Large puffings of muslin or lace came almost up to the knees. Here and there little butterfly bows of ribbon nestled in the interstices of the puffs, and produced a charming effect.

The number of new colours was considerable. "Théba" was a brownish-yellow tint, much favoured, it is said, by the Empress, and consequently a good deal used by authorities on dress. But it did not remain in fashion longer than was considered desirable by persons always in quest of fresh novelties.

Light colours were generally preferred, and every imaginable tint was tried in turn with inconceivable rapidity.

A glimpse of the Empress Eugénie as she drove through the Bois de Boulogne sufficed to set the fair observers to work upon a faithful reproduction of her costume. The toilette at a ball at the Tuileries afforded food for thought during many days to those who had been present.

A few of the court ladies seemed to legislate for Fashion, and sometimes they even competed with their sovereign. Scores of newspapers described the shape and colour of their dresses, their jewels, and the flowers or feathers in their hair, and gave minute details of the fêtes which they adorned as much by their attire as by their beauty, when they were not tempted into eccentricity.

Only a few actresses of celebrity rivalled the influence of the Empress and her court, especially in the matter of hair-dressing.

The modes adopted by Princess Mathilde, Mme. Espinasse, Mme. de Mouchy, Princess Murat, and the Duchess de Morny, were admired, it is true, but so also were those called Marco-Spada, Favart, Miolan-Carvalho, Doche, Traviata, Biche-au-Bois, Pierson, Cabel, Ophelia, Marie Rose, and Adelina Patti.

One "coiffure Eugénie" was effected by raising and drawing back the hair from the forehead, and arranging it with the aid of the "Mainnier bandeau," a simple and easily used contrivance. It was only necessary to divide the bandeau into two equal parts, reserving in the middle a small lock that was tightly plaited. This plait was fixed by a comb, and it supported the foundation on which the "coiffure" was arranged; the firm, puffed-out bands then only required smoothing. With this very few curls were worn. With the help of the Mainnier bands, the Eugénie coiffure formed a roll that increased in size from above the forehead until it reached the ear, where one or two curls falling on the neck completed the arrangement.

Such were the fashions of the first Imperial period, which inaugurated an era of luxury in every rank of society, but did not as yet produce those successive inventions in dress that we shall afterwards have to note, and which are continuously developed in the present generation.



CHAPTER XXVI.

REIGN OF NAPOLEON III. (CONTINUED).

1854 AND 1855.

Crinoline inaugurates the second era of Imperial fashions—The reign of crinoline—Starched petticoats—Whaleboned petticoats—Steel hoops—Two camps are formed, one in favour of, and one inimical to crinoline—Large collars—Marie Antoinette fichus and mantles—Exhibition of 1855—Cashmere shawls—Pure cashmeres—Indian cashmere shawls—Indian woollen shawls—“Mouzaia” shawls—Algerian burnouses—Pompadour parasols—Straight parasols—School for fans—The fan drill—The Queen of Oude’s fans—The Charlotte Corday fichu.

CRINOLINE made its appearance, and revived the era of hoops. It was an ungraceful invention; the crinoline swayed about under the skirt in large graduated tubes made of horsehair.

“Crinoline is only fit,” said a clever woman, “for making grape-bags or soldiers’ stocks.”

This fashion was vigorously and constantly attacked. A lady, for instance, taking her seat in a railway carriage, was compelled to hold her flounces together within the space allotted to her; but a great wave of crinoline overshadowed her neighbour during the whole journey. The next neighbour grumbled naturally, but in suppressed tones, for fear of giving offence. When the journey was over, very uncomplimentary remarks were passed on the obnoxious garment.

There were several other modes of sustaining the flounces of a gown. Why not adopt starched petticoats, or flounced or three-skirted petticoats in coarse calico?

Horsehair was surely not the only resource for swelling out one’s clothes.

In spite of its opponents, or perhaps because of them, crinoline soon ruled with an absolute sway.

Numbers of women, after holding forth against “those horrid

crinolines," were ready to wear starched and flounced petticoats, less ungraceful indeed than horsehair, but extremely inconvenient. The essential point was to increase the size of the figure, to conceal thinness, and, above all, to go with the stream.

Some very fashionable women invented a whaleboned skirt, not unlike a bee-hive. The largest circumference was round the hips, whence the rest of the dress fell in perpendicular lines. Others preferred hoops arranged like those on a barrel. The most unassuming had their flounces lined with stiff muslin, and the edges of their gowns with horsehair, and loaded themselves with four or five starched or "caned" petticoats. What a weight of clothes!

As for the steel hoops that were soon universally worn, not only were they extremely ugly, but they swayed from side to side, and sometimes, if not made sufficiently long, the lower part of the skirt would fall inwards. Men smiled involuntarily at such exhibitions as they passed them in the streets, but the fair wearers were not one whit disturbed.

The gravest political question of the day was not more exciting to Frenchmen than that of crinoline to Frenchwomen. Two camps were formed, in one of which the adversaries of crinoline declaimed against it, while in the other its defenders took their stand on Fashion, whose decrees they contended must be blindly obeyed. Moreover, crinoline had now become generally worn, and its enemies were acquiring a reputation for ill-nature, prejudice, and obstinate grumbling.

But though swelling skirts retained their pre-eminence in fashion, cages and hoops were gradually succeeded by numerous starched petticoats, and this was a slight improvement.

Crinoline therefore became less ridiculous, but not without a struggle; and it took years to bring about a change that the simplest good taste should have effected after the appearance of horsehair, whalebone, and steels.

During the prevalence of skirts resembling balloons, ladies wore very large collars, to which they gave historic names of the time of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV., evoking reminiscences of Anne of Austria, Cinq-Mars, Mdlle. de Mancini, and the Musketeers.

An immense crinoline and an enormous collar constituted the

principal part of a costume. The rest was merely accessory, and was unnoticed on the moving mass for which the pavement of the capital was far too narrow, and which offered a large surface to splashes of mud.

At the same period, Marie Antoinette fichus, either black or white, and trimmed with two rows of lace, were very fashionable; they were crossed over the chest, and tied behind the waist. Black lace bodices were equally popular. Both looked very well over a low dress. Beautiful lace, long hidden in old cupboards, was now brought out and turned to account. Several articles of dress were revived in remembrance of Marie-Antoinette. Besides the fichu, our great ladies wore Marie Antoinette canezyous and mantillas. The ends of the canezyou finished at the waist, while those of the mantilla were crossed under the arms. Nothing could be lighter or more graceful. Both fichu and canezyou found fanatical admirers.

The Empress demi-veils were also a lasting success. Some were made of tulle "point d'esprit," and edged with a deep blond lace, frilled on; others were of open network, and hardly concealed the face at all.

The year following the Paris International Exhibition of 1855, cashmere shawls generally formed a portion of handsome winter costumes. Shawls, even in Ternaux' time, had not been so universally worn.

In addition to those of India, shawls of excellent quality were manufactured in Paris, Lyons, and Nîmes, and in textures not inferior to those of the East.

The pure cashmere shawls were entirely composed of cashmere wool; the "Hindoo" cashmere shawls were the same as the pure cashmere, with the exception of the warp, which was in fancy silk twisted at the ends; "Hindoo" woollen shawls had the same warp as the Indian cashmere, but the woof was of wool, more or less fine in quality.

Towards the end of the summer, as the evenings became cooler, mantillas and basquines were succeeded by "Mouzaia" or "Tunisian" shawls, manufactured from silk refuse, and generally striped in two colours. Some blue and white ones were very pretty, resembling African shawls.

Algerian burnouses with Thibet tassels were greatly used for wraps at theatres, concerts, and balls. French ladies, seen from a distance, looked much like Arabs; but at least their shoulders were protected from the cold, and that was the essential point.

Burnouses with slightly pointed capes, called "Empress mantles," were made in plush, Siberian fur, and plaid velvet. These mantles were universally popular; they were worn in France, and throughout Europe, being most comfortable as well as elegant, when gracefully put on.

In the same year straight parasols were succeeded by those with folding handles, made principally of bordered *moire antique*, and trimmed either with frills of the same, or with fringe.

These "Pompadour" parasols became more and more splendid; they were covered in Chantilly, Alençon, point lace, or blond, and some were embroidered in silk and gold.

They were mostly made of *moire antique*, and always with a double frill, the edges of which were pinked. Generally speaking, the handles were of ivory and coral. The lace coverings fell gradually into disuse, owing to their liability to be torn.

The handles of parasols for morning wear were generally of cane or bamboo; more expensive ones had handles of rhinoceros horn, green ivory, or tortoise-shell, with coral, cornelian, or agate knobs. The "bourgeoises" were quite satisfied to use such as these when out on household business or paying unceremonious visits.

Parasols with folding handles were soon laid aside, and straight handled ones, worthy rivals of the "marquises" or "duchesses," resumed their old place. Women of fashion possessed exquisite white or coloured *moire* parasols, lined with blue, pink, or white, with handles of foreign woods, tortoise-shell inlaid with gold, or rhinoceros horn. For country wear they were made in *écru batiste*, lined with coloured sarsnet.

Parasols were now quite indispensable, for in the wide, open spaces of Paris there was no protection from the sun, the trees affording only a delusive shade.

At the same time, fans were in such universal request, especially with young ladies, that it was proposed in jest to found a school of instruction in the art of managing them.

According to the programme proposed for the imaginary pupils, the word of command would be, "Prepare fans," on which they were to be taken in the hand, and held in readiness. At the word "Unfurl fans," they were to be gradually opened, then closed, then opened again.

Frenchwomen used their fans as skilfully as Spanish women manœuvred theirs. A fashionable Frenchwoman knew how to manage very gracefully all the accessories of her visiting or walking costumes, viz. her fan, parasol, handkerchief, smelling-bottle, card-case, and purse.

In 1859 the public was much interested in the fan bequeathed to the Princess Clotilde by the Queen of Oude; it was of white silk, richly embroidered with emeralds and pearls; the handle of ivory and gold was set with rubies and with seventeen diamonds of the finest water.

But, without being equally splendid, many fans of the period were worthy of being classed among works of art. They were exquisitely painted copies of the works of Watteau, Lancret, and Boucher. Since then young girls have learned to paint fans in our art-schools.

One more variation must be noted in the fashions of 1859.

The Marie Antoinette fichu was succeeded by the Charlotte Corday, which formed a sort of drapery, raised upon the shoulders, and loosely tied in front. It was principally worn by the "bourgeoises." In the "great world," to use an old but conventional expression, ladies preferred the Marie Antoinette; the Empress Eugenie wearing it frequently, as did the most fashionable women of the Second Empire, at varying intervals.



CHAPTER XXVII.

REIGN OF NAPOLEON III. (CONTINUED).

1855 TO 1860.

Sea-bathing and watering-places—Special costumes—Travelling-bags—Hoods and woollen shawls—Convenient style of dress—Kid and satin boots ; high heels—Introduction of the “several” and the “Ristori”—Expensive pocket-handkerchiefs—Waists are worn shorter—Zouave, Turkish, and Greek jackets—Bonnet-fronts—Gold trimmings universally used—Tarlatane, tulle, and lace.

FASHION does not assert itself only in the ordinary round of life. It frequently enlarges its domain in consequence of some new custom, or, at least, the development of some old one ; and an exceptional occurrence will produce variations in it.

For many years French people had been in the habit of frequenting watering-places, and during the Second Empire the “villeggiatura” assumed extraordinary proportions.

Fashionable crowds hastened to Dieppe, Trouville, Pornic, Biarritz, &c., or to Vichy, Plombières, Bagnères, and other thermal places, on the pretext of health.

But these temporary absences did not emancipate them from the yoke of Fashion. The most fantastic and even eccentric costumes were invented for ladies, young girls, and children, and certain costumes that had been popular at the seaside were worn during the ensuing winter season in Paris.

Casaques, hoods, and capelines found their way from the sea-beach into the towns, where, if not worn by great ladies, they were adopted by the “bourgeoises” and working-women.

Travelling-bags, for instance, came into general use in France, and were sometimes transformed into dressing-cases.

Extravagance in dress was the rule at watering-places. Ladies

walked by the sea splendidly attired in silk gowns, brocaded, or shot with gold or silver. One would have imagined one's self present at a ball at the Tuileries, or some ministerial reception, rather than at a seaside place of resort. On fine days ladies wore satin spring-side boots, with or without patent leather tips, but invariably black; blue and chestnut-brown boots being no longer in fashion. In the heat of summer, however, grey boots were admissible. High heels were worn, and have since that time become higher still, until one wonders how women will at last contrive to keep their balance.

Generally speaking, boots were made entirely of kid, but sometimes they were of patent leather. The most stylish were partly kid and partly patent leather, ornamentally stitched, and laced on the instep.

To these we must add slippers, shoes with large bows or buckles, and even modern sandals, which, although very elegantly arranged, were only worn by a small minority.

At the time of which we speak, a singular novelty was produced, called the "several," from the English word meaning *many*.

A "several" contained within itself seven different garments, and could be worn either as a burnous, a shawl, a shawl-mantle, a scarf, a "Ristori," or a half-length basquine. Although patented and of moderate price, "severals" did not long remain in fashion. "Ristoris," in particular, ceased to be worn so soon as the celebrated Italian tragedian whose name they bore, and who had been thoroughly appreciated in France, had left our country.

Pocket-handkerchiefs were round, printed in colours, or with chess-board borders, or hem-stitched, or trimmed with Valenciennes insertion and stitched bias bands. The fashion of expensive handkerchiefs was by no means new, yet never before had they been made with such exceeding care, trimmed with such valuable lace, or so delicately embroidered. It was usual for ladies to embroider their own handkerchiefs, a task on which they bestowed extreme pains, achieving perfect marvels of patience and art.

In 1859, waists were almost on a sudden perceptibly shortened, and a considerable number of women seemed to fear that fashion

was returning to the ungraceful waists of the First Empire—a period which they looked upon as the Iron Age of dress. The style of costume most generally worn that year consisted of a dark green gown with pagoda sleeves, very full, much trimmed, and a wide ribbon sash tied in front. The bonnet would be white and green, with white curtain and strings edged with green, and pretty artificial flowers—particularly daisies, that look like pearls, notwithstanding their golden centres.

The apprehension of a return to short waists was not realized. Good taste triumphed over the incomprehensible whim of wishing to resume former fashions, which had given rise to the adverse and well-founded criticism under which they had previously succumbed.

During 1859 and the following years there was a rage for Zouave, Turkish, and Greek jackets, for “Figaros” and “Ristoris.” Ladies considered them, and still consider them, very comfortable and becoming. They were made in muslin for summer wear, and for the autumn in cashmere or cloth. Some were black, and braided in various colours in the Algerian style, others of different bright shades were braided in black, and some in gold. These jackets were very much worn in the country.

Now it is next to impossible that a jacket should go well with a very short waist, and as jackets were particularly graceful, they certainly helped to maintain the reign of long waists still in fashion at the present day.

Among adjuncts of dress we may mention bonnet-caps, consisting of ruchings or twists, as being very much worn. Nets, also, were extremely fashionable, as they well deserved to be; some were finished with bias bands of velvet, and others with gilt buttons and buckles.

Shortly afterwards, gold began to be used in every possible way; even bonnets were spotted with gold or trimmed with gold buckles. Walking-dresses had gold pipings, bouquets of auriculas were worn, gilt pins with little chains, and frequently large gold buckles.

White Arabian burnouses, shot with gold and silver, were used as opera and ball wraps.

Tarlatans were made with diamond-shaped spots of black velvet, having a gold pip in the centre, and tulles with gold stars; tarlatans, also, with gold spots or stripes.

The extremely transparent muslin texture known as tarlatan is of unknown origin—it had an immense success for balls and parties, and is still much patronized by the most elegant women; at the present time it is constantly seen in our salons.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

REIGN OF NAPOLEON III. (CONTINUED).

1860 TO 1862.

Fashions in 1860 and 1861—Jewellery—Shape of “Russian” bonnets—Nomenclature of girdles—Different styles of dressing the hair—The “Ceres” wreath—Flowers and leaves for the hair—Prohibition of green materials—Anecdotes from the *Union Médicale* and the *Journal de la Nièvre*—Cloth and silk mantles—Braid and astrakan—Four types of bonnet—Morning bonnets—Artificial flowers.

Now that our task is nearly completed, we might, if necessary, appeal to the recollections of our readers, for we have reached the contemporary era, and we approach the present time.

In 1860, as in 1840, necklaces, locketts, and gold or diamond crosses, suspended by a velvet ribbon or a gold chain, were worn round the neck.

The wealthy wore necklaces composed of separate stars formed of precious stones, or of large gold beads arranged three by three, pear-shaped, and terminating in a gold point.

Some little variations apart, ornaments of this kind have always been conspicuous in feminine dress. The utmost inventiveness of jewellers has only modified the shapes of necklaces, locketts, and crosses.

The same may be said of buckles, watches, watch-chains, buttons, and bracelets ; in a word, of all the trinkets successively sanctioned by Fashion.

In the year of which we are now writing, the best dressed women, adopted for watering-place wear the Russian hat proper, if I may so style it. This hat was of Belgian straw, high crowned, the brims turned up and covered with velvet, of perfectly round shape, like a plate, and trimmed with a large rosette in front, and an aigrette higher than the crown of the hat.

With that exception, there was nothing new or original in dress.

Milliners and dressmakers made certain improvements in small matters, and, as is always the case, in default of new inventions, they endeavoured to revive, if only for a very brief period, some of the fashions of the past.

There was a great variety of girdles and belts in 1860, viz. : long and wide ones matching the gown trimmings ; long, plain sashes, the ends trimmed with bands of velvet, and fringe ; also waistbands in Russian or German leather, hand embroidered, or braided in gold and beads.

In 1861, wide velvet belts called "Medici" were worn, and since that time sashes have become an important article of attire, on account of their forming part of the national dress of Alsace and Lorraine.

Bands and belts of all sorts seemed to indicate, even at that period, the metal belts that were afterwards fashionable in 1875.

In 1861, bands of gold, either straight or diadem shaped, were worn on the head, and were extremely becoming to dark-haired women. Large gold combs, with a heavy ring to hold the hair, velvet coronets with gold beads or buttons, velvet twists and aigrettes, feather head-dresses, bunches of flowers, velvet bows, and "Ceres" wreaths were very fashionable.

The favourite style of dressing the hair was in very large rolls, with a bunch of berries and ash privet on the top of the head ; or a wreath of hops and foliage ; or one of oak leaves with gold acorns, and a gold aigrette in the centre. Wreaths of cornflower, with wheat-ears meeting over the forehead, were "Ceres" wreaths. These seem to us to have been among the last styles arranged with order, and in which the talent of the hairdresser might manifest itself or produce any artistic result.

The fashion of wearing false and dyed hair was about to reappear, and French ladies were to put in practice the axiom, that "beautiful disorder is an effect of art."

A curious fact attracted the attention of Parisian society in 1861 ; and the ladies promptly discarded all green materials. In a professional journal, the *Union Médicale*, the following paragraph appeared :—

"A young married lady who had gone to a party, wearing a

pale green satin gown, was attacked, after dancing several quadrilles, with sensations of numbness and want of power in the lower limbs, tightness in the chest, vertigo, and headache, and was obliged to return home. The symptoms gradually abated, but the feeling of weakness in the abdominal region lasted until the third day. No special cause, such as tight lacing, &c., could be discovered, and suspicion having been directed to the colour of the lady's gown, a chemical analysis was made, and the presence of a quantity of arsenite of copper detected. It is the opinion of Professor Blasius, that the movement produced by dancing might, especially with dresses of the ample width required by the present fashion, suffice to detach a quantity of the arsenical dye, which on being absorbed by the lungs would give rise to symptoms of arsenical poisoning."

The *Journal de la Nièvre* wrote as follows:—

"Some dressmakers living at Nevers had received an order to make a green tarlatan gown. Several strips of the material had been torn off for ruchings, thereby producing a fine dust, which, settling on the face and penetrating the body through the respiratory and nasal organs, had occasioned colic in some cases, and in others an eruption on the face. . . ."

Green wall-papers and green dress materials were declared to be equally pernicious to health.

An interdict was accordingly laid on green, until some chemical process had been discovered to obviate the dangers described by the *Union Médicale* and the *Journal de la Nièvre*.

Women were quite ready to suffer for the sake of their beauty, to tighten their waists, to imprison their feet in shoes too narrow for them, to run the risk of inflammation of the chest by wearing low-cut gowns; but they were not willing to be poisoned by green dyes, especially as green is not a very becoming colour to most women, and by no means sets off the complexion.

In order to withstand the cold of winter, our Parisian ladies made up their minds to wear mantles of soft cloth, or heavy "gros-grain" silk, although the weight of such garments fatigued them.

These mantles were generally trimmed with broad braid; but some of them were literally covered with embroidery, and were

consequently very expensive. Real or imitation Astrakan was used for every kind of paletot ; the curly coats of the still-born lambs being greatly admired.

Braiding and Astrakan had a long reign ; both were constantly used to trim various new shapes in mantles or coats, which they greatly improve without adding to the cost. The town of Astrakan, in Russia, benefited largely by the French fashions in that particular instance.

The following are types of the most fashionable bonnets, with which feathers, or velvet flowers, and rosettes, tufts (called chous), or bows of black lace and white blond, were worn : (1) a bonnet in royal blue velvet, with a scarf of white tulle laid on the brim ; (2) a black velvet bonnet, with white tulle scarf put round the crown, and falling over the curtain ; (3) a red satin (groseille des Alpes) drawn bonnet, covered with tulle, and with bows at the side ; (4) an orange velvet bonnet, with soft crown and white tulle brim, a wreath of flowers on the edge.

For morning dress, horsehair, Belgian straw, and chip bonnets were worn.

Very little change was observable in boots, which were generally made of leather or Turkish satin (satin turc) ; shoes, either trimmed or plain, and pumps were no longer in fashion.

Ball-dresses in 1861-2 were generally rose-coloured, with an over-skirt of lace, and adorned with flowers. On the head was worn a brilliant bunch of roses, giving a charming finish to the whole costume.

The manufacture of artificial flowers received a great impetus at the Exhibition of 1855 ; and it is no exaggeration to say that flowers which rivalled Nature itself were produced.



CHAPTER XXIX.

REIGN OF NAPOLEON III. (CONTINUED).

1862 TO 1867.

Sunshades in 1862—Sailors' jackets, jerseys, and pilot-jackets—Princess or demi-princess gowns ; Swiss bodices ; corset or postillion belts—Lydia and Lalla Rookh jackets—Vespertina opera cloaks—"Longchamps is no more"—Bois de Boulogne—Russian or Garibaldi bodices—Paletot vest—Empress belt—1885 patents for inventions regarding dress are taken out in 1864—Victoria skeleton skirts ; Indian stays ; train supporters—"Titian"-coloured hair—The Peplum in 1866—Epicycloide steels ; aquarium earrings—Description of a court ball-dress—The fashions of Louis XV., Louis XVI., and the Empire are revived—Sedan chairs—Handkerchiefs at all prices.

IN our beautiful France, where the fault of the climate is its too frequent showers, it often happened that ladies set out to walk, parasol in hand, with the sun shining brightly overhead, but during their walk a downpour of rain would overtake them, ruin their dress in one moment, and reduce them to utter despair.

How were such heavy misfortunes to be avoided ? How were mortals to contend against the uncertainty of climate ?

A remedy was sought and found. Parasol-makers invented the "en-tout-cas," equally useful in sunshine and in rain ; and in 1862 they went a step farther, and manufactured parasols that might have been called "métis," or half-breeds—that is to say, half en-tout-cas and half sunshade. These were equally useful as a protection against heavy rain or burning sunshine.

And now began the reign of the comfortable ; every day the dress and bearing of women became more unrestrained, and less formal.

In 1862, sailors' jackets, jerseys, and pilot-jackets were not only worn while travelling, or in the country, but also in towns. They were made of light cloth, in English textures, in silk poplin, alpaca, and black silk with much gimp trimming—for gimp is

never out of fashion; it is too valuable to the dressmakers, as a means of increasing the amount of their bills.

Simultaneously with the introduction of the fancy garments I have just mentioned, gowns were very prettily made, with bodices either slightly pointed, or with waistbands or long sashes, or else princess shape or demi-princess. Swiss bodices were also worn, and "corslet" and "postillion" belts.

The above designations need no commentary; the elegant appearance of such costumes can be easily imagined; they were "characteristic," and not always of French origin. On that very account, perhaps, they were the more successful.

Very many fashions are the result of caprice; but they are also modes of commemorating some great literary, musical, or dramatic success, or of celebrating some important event.

In 1863, the Fashion journals were loud in praise of the "Lydia" paletot, the "Lalla Rookh" jacket, and the "Vespertina" opera cloak. "Senorita" jackets, in velvet, silk, light shades of cashmere, and cloth, were in great favour.

The ready reception nowadays given to new fashions without waiting, as formerly, for certain seasons is easily explained. In 1863 a cry was heard, "Longchamps is no more!" and it is true that Longchamps has ceased to exist. The traditional drive has lost its importance. Only a few tailors and dressmakers, seated in hired carriages, parade their new designs in the broad avenue of the Champs Elysées; poor lay figures, wanting in any kind of ease or elegance. The days are gone when fashionable Paris used to display the newly invented modes on the road leading from the Abbey of Longchamps to the Tuileries; when the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in Holy Week were red-letter days in the annals of extravagance and splendour. At the present time, the Bois de Boulogne is a constant scene of fashionable rivalry, and is equally crowded in winter and summer, spring and autumn.

Daily drives have thus taken the place of the annual solemnities of Longchamps. The garments that are most noticeable set the fashion, which is greatly determined by the rank of the wearer. True, Longchamps is dead; but it has been resuscitated in a

brilliant and permanent form among the leafy avenues of the Bois de Boulogne.

For visiting dress, in 1863, Frenchwomen gave the preference to white bodices of some thin material; a pink skirt, striped with a darker shade of the same colour; a straw bonnet, trimmed with black ribbon and a few wild flowers; a knot of lace at the throat, and some black lace round the wrists.

The most striking of the slight innovations of 1864 were the Russian or "Garibaldi" bodices of foulard, or of white, red, blue, or Havana silk, either braided or embroidered in Russian stitch; and the Louis XV. coats and waistcoats, of an English cloth of black and grey mixture. The waistcoats, when not of the same material, were of velvet, smooth cloth, or "gros-grain" silk. The Russian bodices, however, and the coat-waistcoats, were considered too much in "undress" style, and were soon succeeded by further novelties.

Ladies who still wore them, provided themselves with silken "aumonières," or bags embroidered in jet and suspended by bows of ribbon and lace; and with the Empress or hygienic belt, a small corset made of elastic material, which, when warm, adapted itself to every movement of the body. It was, in fact, the "stays" perfected.

The quantity of toilet articles manufactured in a single year is really remarkable.

In 1864, the *Bulletin des Lois* published an edict, by which eighteen hundred and eighty-five inventions patented in that one year were registered. On every page is something concerning dress, viz.: an instrument for waving the hair; steel skeleton skirts, called "Victoria cages," "corset à jour," or Indian stays; petticoats for supporting trains, called "porte-trains;" bonnets with faded American creeper, feather parasols, a "transformable and multiple system of clothing," iron shoes, wicker head-dresses, petticoats with movable flounces, "bijou" garters, &c.

We must not forget that the year 1864 was famous for the adoption of the "Titian" tresses. Red hair or yellow hair was an ideal eagerly sought after by many ladies, who either concealed

their own beautiful dark hair, or dyed it to the desired shade. In a certain section of society there was quite a rage for Titian-coloured hair.

There were some quite impossible hues, intended to harmonize with the thickly laid-on paint of the face,—for faces were painted,—just as in the eighteenth century.

Laughter frequently greeted the appearance of these painted idols in places of public resort, but it was quite ineffectual.

An elegant costume, worn in 1865, consisted of a pearl grey dress, with braidings of the same colour, a black belt and silver buckle, and a black bonnet with red ribbons.

The “peplum” of 1866 was formed of a small “corslet,” to which a basque was attached, square in front and at the back, and very long at the sides. This was called the Empress peplum. With this new garment, crinoline was decidedly an anomaly, and its fall commenced. The “peplum,” regarded from that point of view, marks an epoch in history, and deserves our gratitude.

Unfortunately all gowns of heavy material were shaped “à l'Empire.” The skirts were cut straight at the back, and worn with melon-shaped dress-improvers in horsehair. Stiff muslin or a small down cushion was sometimes used instead of horsehair.

One manufacturer invented a petticoat with springs, of which part could be detached at pleasure; another, a transparent parasol; a third advertised his system of aëration for the hair; and a fourth sold notched steels for petticoats, called “épicycloïdes.” There were “aquarium” earrings, consisting of small globes in rock crystal suspended to little branches of water-grasses in enamel; the globes contained fishes. Chains called “Benôiton,” after Sardou's famous play, were worn below the chin and underneath the bonnet strings, like a curb chain.

The principal Paris newspapers described the dress of Mme. R. K—— at a court ball as follows: “A white gown with alternate bands of tulle and satin; above this a skirt of silver tulle, with wreaths of roses, and spangled with little stars or dots of black velvet; a very long black velvet train edged with satin; a belt of emeralds and diamonds; hair dressed ‘à l'Empire,’ and powdered

with gold ; a knot of black velvet and a diamond aigrette in the hair ; *no crinoline.*"

Yet a few years, and crinoline will be no more. From 1865 to 1867 costumes were worn short, and no longer swept the streets. But shortly afterwards skirts were lengthened again, almost as much as in 1860.

The Louis XV. and the Louis XVI. styles were equal favourites for ball dresses, and they soon became fashionable for walking. Ruchings, kiltings, and plaitings "*à la vieille*" were much used. The Watteau mantle, with two large box plaits hanging at the back, and the "Bachelick," with a pointed hood, were both equally popular. The fashionable bonnets were the "Trianon," "Watteau," "Lamballe," and "Marie Antoinette."

Under the influence of these eighteenth-century costumes, sedan chairs for going to church, or for early morning visits, seemed bound to reappear. Mmes. de la Rochefoucauld, De la Trémouille, De Faucènes, and De Metternich used them ; but this was a mere caprice of wealth, and it did not last.

Muffs were small in 1866 : the handsomest were of sable tails, and were very valuable. A very small one cost 350 francs. Women who were not rich, or who were of an economical turn, contented themselves with imitation fur, or with Australian marten, Astrakan being now out of fashion. A good many muffs were made of velvet, trimmed with fur or feathers, and as they were essentially useful appendages, they were no longer confined to elegant costumes as formerly ; the "*bourgeoises*" and even the Paris working-women used those of inferior quality, and have continued to do so.



CHAPTER XXX.

REIGN OF NAPOLEON III: (END).

1867 TO 1870.

Five different styles of dressing the hair in 1868 and 1869—"Petit catogan;" three triple bandeaus—The hair is worn loose—Dress of the Duchess de Mouchy—Refinements of fashion—Various journals—New shades—Crinoline is attacked; it resists; it succumbs—Chinese fashions.

AT this time women indulged more than ever in extravagance in dress, and in the strangest whims of fashion. The minor newspapers published paragraphs describing the costumes of this or that great lady, designating each by her name, by no means to the displeasure of the fair ones thus distinguished. Tailors and dressmakers grew rich.

A very favourite costume consisted of a pink gown, a straw bonnet and white feather, yellow gloves, and pale grey boots.

In 1868-9 the following styles of dressing the hair were fashionable:—

1. The hair drawn up from the forehead in a small "catogan" or club, and a large "coque" or bow of hair above; short curls over the "catogan," and the same on each side.
2. The hair drawn up from the forehead without a parting; a large "coque" in the middle, surrounded by six smaller ones; six long ringlets falling from the back of the head, a little higher than the "coque," low on the shoulders.
3. The hair fixed on the forehead, three immense "coques" on the top of the head, and ringlets forming a chignon behind.
4. The hair drawn straight up from the roots, and forming three rolls falling backwards; a "catogan" and three "coques"

underneath ; one long "repentir" or ringlet, waved, but not curled.

5. Three triple bandeaus in front ; a small "catogan" surrounded by three rows of plaits ; three large curls behind.

The hair was generally worn high, and dressed in a complicated style, but it was, above all, dishevelled. It was frequently worn quite loose and in disorder ; less so, however, than in 1875.

The ornamental portions of dress were extremely handsome and expensive. A great deal of jewellery was worn. In 1869, at the Beauvais ball, the Duchess de Mouchy wore diamonds to the value of 1,500,000 francs. Her dress consisted of a gown and train of white gauze spotted with silver ; a rather short overskirt of red currant-coloured silk, forming a ruched "tablier ;" a low, square-cut bodice, and shoulder-straps of precious stones ; a sort of scarf of flowers, with silver foliage, fell from one shoulder slanting across the skirt.

At Compiègne, Biarritz, and the Tuileries, by turns, brilliant costumes such as these were seen and admired, and the day after a fête the fashionable newspapers gave minute descriptions of the most elegant dresses, and a guess at their approximate cost.

For many years, and although there was little novelty in the fashions, they never ceased to be the order of the day. More than ever did women make them their occupation, and men also were deeply interested in the subject.

There was, so to speak, a tournament of coquetry in Europe, in which the French ladies always bore away the palm.

New periodicals specially devoted to Fashion were published in France and abroad, and supplied a real want in circles where many articles of dress were made at home.

A taste for handsome dress pervaded every class of society, a "good cut" became every day of more importance, and the smallest variations were adopted, since radical changes were not taking place.

During the Second Empire new colours called "Magenta,"

“Solferino,” “Shanghai,” and “Pekin” were produced in much the same chronological succession as the military expeditions to which they owed their names, and which had been successful, indeed, but at a great cost in blood.

Our victories in Italy being thus commemorated by Frenchwomen, they condescended to recall in like manner the capture of Peking and the famous treaty of Shanghai. The extreme East was to them no longer an unknown land.

A decided change soon took place in the cut of dresses. As had frequently happened before, Fashion went from one extreme to the other; balloons were succeeded by sacks, and tubs by laths.

In 1869, when the question of giving up crinoline was mooted, the leaders of fashion consulted together. One party declared that the reign of crinoline must come to an end on account of its abuses; the other pointed out that “as women now walk so badly on their high heels, crinolines are necessary, and must be retained, because they sustain the weight of the skirts.”

The latter party gained the day at first, and crinolines were merely modified. They were made in white horsehair, with rolls round the bottom and up the back only.

But, after all, crinoline was destined to extinction, were it only because it had already lasted a long time. At various intervals its adversaries had dealt it vigorous blows, and its partisans now began to perceive that it was both inconvenient and ridiculous.

Crinoline could resist no further, and it fell. Dare we say for ever?

Crinoline was succeeded by Chinese skirts, extremely narrow over the hips, and precisely like those worn by the inhabitants of Peking or Canton.

The transition was abrupt and sudden. It seemed, however, the most natural thing in the world.

Together with tight skirts, several other accessories of dress

were made as much like Chinese fashions as possible. Up to a certain point French ladies approved of the new style, which has since that time undergone several transformations, the first being the introduction of the poufs and “tournures” that were still worn as recently as four years ago.





HISTORY OF FASHION

Illustrated by
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CHAPTER XXXI.

THE THIRD REPUBLIC.

1870 TO 1874.

The years 1870 and 1871—The siege of Paris—General mourning—Simplicity and economy—Parisian velvet and pekin—A concert costume—A cloth costume—Alsatian bows and costumes—Soirées at the Presidency—Marie Stuart and Michael Angelo bonnets—"Hunting stockings"—Rabagas hats—The years 1872 and 1873—Fan parasols—"Leopold Robert" bonnets—The year 1873—Return of luxury—Regent belts and "sovereign" dress-improvers—Silks—"Moderate" costumes—The burning of the Opera House—Sale on behalf of those made orphans by the war—The ball for the Lyons weavers—Cashmere tunics—Dislike to gloves—Petticoats—Charles IX. shoes—Slippers—The year 1874—"Page" bonnets and "Margot" hats—Hair in the Swiss style; false hair—The ball given by the Chamber of Commerce—Green—Jet—Various costumes—Hair-dressing—"Mercury" bonnets.

THE fatal year of 1870 will be long and sorrowfully remembered. Our hearts are still bleeding for the misfortunes of our beloved France, suddenly called upon to undertake a frightful war, and to accept a peace purchased only at the cost of terrible sacrifices.

During the siege of Paris by the German troops, when all communication with the departments was cut off, the part played by Fashion was interrupted, and the source of caprice in dress completely dried up. How could Frenchwomen indulge in the luxuries of dress while their native soil was red with the blood of their fathers, husbands, brothers, or sons? How could they occupy their minds with superfluities, when millions were in want of the necessities of life, when the inhabitants of the capital lacked food, and when France, from one end to the other, was in the agony of a great despair?

For many months the pleasant things of home were laid aside, and Fashion veiled her face. Women passed their days in encouraging the soldiers, in making lint, in nursing the wounded,

and in all sorts of contrivances for alleviating the privations of innumerable households. There was no room for other pursuits.

Paris was encompassed by her enemies, and became like an extinct sun to the rest of France. The journals of Fashion that had formerly taught the whole world the latest Parisian inventions in attire or hair-dressing were now silent! The love of dress, of jewels, of brilliant finery, had vanished!

Charitable collections were set on foot, to which the wealthy contributed some of their diamonds and lace.

How great was the change in a few months! From riches to poverty, from thoughtless gaiety to universal mourning! The few heartless women who ventured to parade the streets in gay attire were scathed by the contempt of those who passed them by, and pitied by all generous minds.

Such theatres as remained open, gave performances only on behalf of the wounded soldiers, all fêtes were for charitable purposes, and Fashion, entering into the spirit of the times, ruled with both simplicity and economy. The audiences on these occasions had no desire to shock public opinion by brightly coloured dresses, by exaggerated "poufs," or by the display of valuable jewels. They bore in mind that boundless luxury had contributed to the downfall of France, and they set the example of reform both in dress and manners. They selected appropriate costumes, ladylike and graceful it is true, but free from affectation, and with due regard to the melancholy circumstances of that terrible time.

At the Trouville Races, in 1871, there was nothing new in the costumes worn, in the true signification of the word, but they were neither like those of the preceding year, nor, as regards brilliancy, like those of the latter years of the Second Empire, and on that account alone they deserve mention. Gowns, without crinolines or trains, no longer swept the beach as formerly, nor did they display the wealth of their wearers; the visitors to the seaside were simply and modestly attired, and resorted thither for bathing merely.

"Parisian velvet" was the new winter material. This was a

sort of black satin, with velvet lozenges or diamonds. Another kind of velvet-satin, called Pekin, was very fashionable. Different varieties of these two materials made them suitable to every figure. The costume was completed by a black velvet bonnet with curled black feathers falling over the crown, and velvet strings.

Satin was mixed with "Irish" cashmere for gowns, and trimmed with fringe, gimp, and lace. The above styles were, I repeat, dignified, and appropriate to the then position of France. There were some rare exceptions that contrasted with the general rule.

At a private concert for the benefit of the sufferers by the war, the principal singer—an amateur—wore a gown of white double crape, with demi-train and puffings at the bottom; three large "pattes" of black velvet fell over the skirt, and on each of these was an anchor in Rhine crystal; the bodice was low, and trimmed with two ruchings of black velvet, divided by one of white crape. The head-dress was black velvet and pale Bengal roses.

Under the melancholy circumstances, black was universally worn, but it was not like ordinary mourning, being richly trimmed; and by degrees, as months passed on, and the remembrance of recent disasters became fainter, lighter shades were permitted to modify the exclusively black garments. The so-called "cloth costume" was also much worn; this consisted of a tunic, jacket, and skirt. The tunic was polonaise shape, plain in front, and with two Watteau plaits behind; the skirt was of silk, either flounced or kilted, or else in orleans or cashmere, for morning wear. A wide-sleeved jacket, cut out all round in "battlements," was worn over this costume.

Alsatian bows for the hair, in remembrance of our beloved and lost Alsace, were much worn by young girls. Marie Antoinette fichus and Charlotte Corday caps were still in fashion, and becomingly adorned with Alsatian bows.

During the Carnival of 1872—hardly a brilliant one, as may be imagined—the Alsatian costume was quite a success. The same may be said of the costume of Lorraine. But, to our mind, there was something childish in thus exhibiting our regret at having ceded two of our finest provinces to Germany; it was no

affair of fashion. Visiting costumes were trimmed with ribbon rosettes at the side, in imitation of the Alsatian custom, and this style remained in fashion for more than a year.

When summer came, alpaca, mohair, and grey "poil-de-chèvre" or goats'-hair dresses were seen at all the public promenades. Black and dark shades were worn less and less every day. It was evident to all that the worldly spirit was reviving to a certain extent. Moreover, trade and manufacture required support; manufacturers, traders, and workmen had all of them suffered, and custom was needed to repair their losses.

Towards autumn the managers of theatres began to bring out new pieces; and shortly afterwards, receptions at the Presidency gave some impetus to the manufacture of dress-stuffs, which had been seriously affected by the siege of Paris.

Among other dresses, I recollect having seen one made with a demi-train, a deep kilting "à la vieille" round the bottom of the skirt, at the head of the kilting five rows of thick cording, and two bias flounces gathered together. The bodice was in one piece, and cut like a long square waistcoat. The basques and sleeves were in woollen material, and the waistcoat in silk. With this was worn a Marie Stuart bonnet in China crape and "faïlle" silk, edged with jet beads, and trimmed with a tuft of black feathers with one long hanging plume. The "Michael Angelo" bonnet, lined with some light colour, and the "sailor" hat, in felt or dark velvet, were also favourites. Sets of collars and cuffs were made in linen, trimmed with Valenciennes or guipure; and dresses were trimmed with China crape, cashmere, and black or white lace.

We may mention, as novelties, doeskin, kid, and cashmere gloves, with as many as five, six, and even ten buttons; and clocked stockings in all colours, called hunting stockings, and very much liked by the public.

Ladies' costumes were completed by small muffs, braided and fur-trimmed dolmans, circular lined cloaks of silk or cachemire; the comfortable "Duchess mantles," that might well have been called Oriental; satin-lined hoods; and "Rabagas" bonnets, which

were made of the same velvet or satin as the dress, and with a long feather curled round the crown.

The "Rabagas" hat was brought into fashion by a play of Victorien Sardou's, that attracted much attention by its political and reactionary character.

An absurdity of the winter of 1872 deserves notice. Ladies carried enormous fans, almost as big as parasols, with a painted bouquet of flowers in the left-hand corner. This unfortunate invention was intended to serve both as fan and screen, but its reign was of short duration. The "fan-parasol" was, in fact, a failure.

The "Leopold Robert" bonnet, on the contrary, had a great success, owing to its artistic shape. It consisted of a wreath of flowers or foliage placed on a band of plain or puckered velvet; ribbon or lace at the back fell over the chignon; there were no strings. A veil called a "provisoire" was wound round the head; it covered the face, Jewish fashion; and the long ends crossed behind, then brought forward and tied under the chin, took the place of bonnet strings.

The "Leopold Robert" bonnet lent a charm to ugliness itself. Was it on that account that pretty women gave it up? Were they afraid of being lost in the crowd, and of receiving only a divided homage?

In 1873, feminine dress became extremely complicated. All kinds of ornamentation were used with more or less happy effect. It seemed as if feminine vanity were endeavouring to make up for the lost years 1871 and 1872. Simplicity was succeeded by finery of all sorts, and the trimmings of dresses cost ruinous prices. Fifteen or twenty flounces would be put on one skirt. Costumes were trimmed with chased, bronzed, or oxydized buttons.

After an interregnum of many years, steel ornaments were again worn in the hair, and young girls wore a locket on velvet round their throat. "Regent" belts and "sovereign" dress-improvers were much worn, and were very becoming.

Although there were no essential changes in the fashions, they became every year more difficult to define, because women were

beginning to dress independently, each one according to her own taste, and with reference to age, position, and means, without servile imitation of any particular fashion. The ground-work of dress varied little, but the details were almost infinite in number, and were, in fact, characteristic of each individual wearer. This was regarded as anarchical by persons accustomed to the strict discipline of Fashion.

In a space of less than two months appeared the "Montenegrin," a sort of dolman which defined the figure becomingly, and was covered with braid and silk embroidery; jet ornaments in great profusion (aigrettes, buckles, sprigs, and wheat-ears); "Michael Angelo" bonnets, trimmed with moss-roses and lilies of the valley; Tussore gowns (an Indian silk), trimmed with black velvet; "Abbé" collars of the Louis XV. fashion, in plaited muslin, with embroidered bands in front; and deep cuffs worn over tight sleeves.

A great variety of materials was used, but plain or figured silks in medium qualities were always more popular than fancy stuffs. Frills, and ruchings of net or "crêpe lisse," were worn round the throat.

Locketts and "saint esprits" in brilliants, strass, or Alençon diamonds, and Normandy crosses delicately carved in light foliated patterns, were favourite ornaments at this period.

Many Parisian ladies wore tight-fitting tunics or polonaises in the street. Some very fashionable bonnets were made without crowns; these were merely a thick wreath of vine leaves or flowers, rising rather high in front. Clusters of curls fell over the back of the neck, displaying the colour and beauty of the hair in a most charming way.

Costumes were of two kinds, the "extraordinary" and the "moderate"—the latter were rather less worn than the former. Waistcoats and corslets remained in favour during the summer; also long sleeveless cashmere and velvet jackets, and Louis XV. "casaques" in winter.

On Tuesday evening, October 28, 1873, an unforeseen calamity befell the world of fashion. The Paris Opera House, in which so

many masterpieces had been performed, and which was so admirably adapted for music, was burned to the ground.

One of the temples of Fashion had perished in a night; and for a time the splendid attire that had been wont to display itself at the Opera, had also to vanish and be seen no more. No more was the dazzling light of the great chandelier to be shed upon the "poufs" in English point, blond, jet, or tulle; the tiaras and "rivières" of diamonds, the state costumes, the magnificent Circassian belts!

The destruction of the Opera House dealt a terrible blow to aristocratic finery, and forced it to take refuge in balls and promenades.

The "toilette d'Opera," which was to rival that "des Italiens," had to wait until its temple should be rebuilt. The probation, however, was short.

We are bound to admit that things were not so bad as might have been expected. At that very moment luxury and fashion were assuming gigantic proportions, and under the Third Republic women continued to wear clothes of excessive costliness. It was fortunate that persons of slender means were permitted to copy in simple materials the shape and trimming of high-priced costumes. The "cut" became the principal point in dress, other things being left to the choice and discretion of the wearer.

On the occasion of a charity sale on behalf of the orphans of the war, at the new Opera House, Parisians perceived that the love of striking costumes had not passed away. The lady stallholders—Mme. Thiers, Mdle. Dosne, the Maréchale de MacMahon, and the Princesses Troubetskoï and De Beauvau—vied with each other in elegance of attire, and the lady purchasers were not left behind; their dresses were of various colours, more or less harmonious, and composed of mazes of material and floods of ribbon, heaps of lace, kiltings, flounces, and bows; in a word, all that can be conceived of richness and elegance.

Under the peristyle of the Opera Garnier, parasols in "écru" silk spotted with blue or pink, trimmed with bows and two rows of lace; and also "cane" parasols with large handles, were

seen. According to the strict laws of costume, the parasol should be suited to the costume, and even the fan should match.

A ball was given afterwards at the same theatre for the benefit of the Lyons weavers, and the dresses were more magnificent than ever. But no one found fault. Mme. Musard made a great sensation in a dress of lime-tree colour, richly brocaded with bouquets of roses. The material had been manufactured at Lyons at a cost of 100 francs per yard. White predominated in the dresses of the queens of the ball—Mmes. de Mouchy, Aymery de la Rochefoucauld, De Béhague, De Pène, De Beaufort, Alphonse and Gustave de Rothschild. The latter wore a wonderful “apron” of pearls worth several fortunes.

A lady not quite in the first circle, would practise economy by wearing a cashmere tunic. This was simply her venerable burnous, that had been lying for years in her wardrobe, re-made and trimmed with lace and jet braid. Or she would resort to the art of the dyer, and her old green gown would emerge from his hands a new handsome black one, with a few yards of velvet added. The art of dyeing performs miracles, and at small cost.

A strange rumour was current in the highest circles in 1873.

What was that?

Nothing less than the abolition of gloves! This was assuredly no question of economy, for their place was to be taken by a fashion worthy of the days of the Directory. Women of fashion proposed to wear clusters of rings between every finger joint; each hand to bear a fortune.

This was the fantastic dream of some “blasée” fine lady, longing for novelty at any price. It was not realized, as may be imagined; and gloves kept their place—an important one—among articles of feminine attire.

A desirable change in taste was manifested in the almost total suppression of the trimmings with which gowns had been overloaded. Dress remained as pretty as before, and cost much less. A Frenchwoman can easily attain the beautiful, without overstepping the bounds of moderation. Much of the grace and

becomingness of a costume depends on the under-skirts, and, simple as they seem, they will long retain their importance.

Waistcoats, "French Guard" coats, and "Leaguer" hats seemed like encroachments on masculine dress, but the waistcoat was partially disguised by a good deal of ornamentation.

Charles IX. house-shoes were much worn; they were of fine kid, rounded at the tips, with high pointed heels and low vamps trimmed with bows; a kid strap across the instep, with a large square buckle in steel or Rhine crystal.

Felt slippers were worn of every shade of colour, braided in wool. Cloth boots, with kid under-leathers, were made to match the costume with admirable skill.

The year 1874 effected no change in the fashions of 1873 as we have described them. But some of the minor accessories were varied, and thus an air of novelty was given to the beginning of each season.

Flounces of English, Alençon, and Mechlin lace were mixed with quantities of raised embroidery, beautifully executed.

A new shape for bonnets was favourably received in the highest circles of fashion. It was of black velvet, with low round crown, and wide brim slightly curled, something like a miller's hat. The edge and crown were bordered with jet beads. Some ladies wore this shape in felt, with a long natural ostrich feather. Young girls preferred the "Page" hat, with soft crown and drawn brim, and the "toquet Margot," the brim of which was plaited, and widened at the back into something like a bonnet curtain.

Black continued in fashion during the winter, and was made brilliantly effective by the addition of lace trimmings and quantities of jet. Very pretty fichus made of white or black tulle, sprinkled with jet beads, and a high collar with frills on the inner side, were sometimes worn over black costumes.

Ball dresses were characterized by deep "Henri II." ruffs, and "Louis XV." sleeves trimmed with steel, silver, or gold beads, embroidered, and even gold lace. Muslin and tarlatan resumed their former place in female attire. Past periods were called upon for their fashions, either successively or together. Costumes of a

composite order, if I may borrow an architectural term, were introduced.

The hair continued to be dressed high, and frizzed or waved over the forehead. Ringlets at the back of the head went out of fashion; only a couple of curls were allowed to stray on the neck. We may mention the "Swiss" style of head-dress as something new. It consisted of two long plaits hanging behind, and ending in a curl, above which was tied a narrow ribbon.

False hair was worn more generally than ever. We learn from some interesting and curious statistics that 51,816 kilogrammes of false hair were sold in France in 1871; 85,959 in 1872; and 102,900 in 1873. These figures were probably surpassed in 1874 and the succeeding years.

The hair is chiefly procured from Normandy, Auvergne, and Brittany. Haircutters whose special business is the collecting of it, procure it in April and May. They give in exchange coloured prints, muslin, and calico, or they pay for it in money at five francs the kilogramme.

Who could have thought, at an earlier period, that the trade in hair could have become so greatly developed in France?

During the winter, ladies principally aimed at warmth, and replaced the classic waterproof by a circular cloak of silk, lined with flannel or with fur, and slightly wadded. The furs most commonly used, besides squirrel and Russian wild cat, were otter and Russian fox.

The Chamber of Commerce in Paris gave a ball in honour of Marshal MacMahon, the second President of the Republic, at which thousands of fairy-like costumes were all the more admired because they had been so long unseen at official receptions. Few dresses came unhurt out of the palace on that occasion; the dust was stifling, the crowd overwhelming, and the pushing most unpleasant.

In the spring of 1874, tunics were succeeded by a sort of peplum, cut in one piece with the bodice, and forming basques at the back.

Ladies wore "merveilleuse" hats in jet lace, one side turned up, with a bunch of flowers.

Green was the favourite colour for gowns—verdegris, mignonette, frog-green, bottle-green, canary-green, sage-green, &c., &c.

This reminds us of an historical incident in the reign of Henri III., on the occasion of a banquet given by that king to some gentlemen who had accompanied him to the siege of La Charité. "The ladies," says Pierre l'Etoile, "were all dressed in green; and all the guests were likewise in green, for which cause, 60,000 francs worth of green silk had been obtained from Paris."

But to return to 1874. Green did not in that year create any great excitement in trade; but jet was so extensively used, that the effect was similar to that produced by the rage for green silk under Henri III. In the course of a few months, several bead manufacturers at Venice made immense sums of money. The foreign manufacturers who supplied our French ladies with jet beads are at the present day millionnaires.

Together with the "merveilleuse" hat, the "incroyable" bodice came into fashion. The latter opened over a waistcoat fastened by handsome fancy buttons. The top was trimmed with a ruching lined with lilac; the sleeves were in three pieces, with embroidered bands between.

Generally speaking, costumes were made in shades of one colour, rather than in contrasting colours.

Pelted boots for ladies were introduced. This fashion probably originated on the turf, but the boots were practically useless, except for travelling.

Foulard was the favourite material for gowns, and the delightful Hungarian or Croatian paletot was universally adopted. This was trimmed with glass beads and frogs, and the shape was exquisitely becoming to the figure, while the long flowing sleeves lent grace to the least graceful.

Some women of the highest rank favoured an extraordinary costume called the "sheath" or "cloche." They enveloped themselves in a garment which fitted closely to the whole body,

This whim was adopted only by a few, because it was not becoming.

A great deal of trimming was worn on beige, mohair, tussore, alpaca, and *écru foulard* gowns.

False hair went out of fashion, and was succeeded by the "knocker" or "Catogan" style. Instead of being frizzed and twisted in every direction, the hair was gathered together at the back of the head in a loose wide plait, and looped on the nape of the neck with a ribbon bow.

Several new bonnet shapes were introduced during the summer, viz. the "Trianon," the "Elizabeth," the "Charlotte Corday," the "sailor hat," the "shepherdess," the "Bersaglière," the "Bandoulier," the "Fra Diavolo," the "Orpheus," and others. At the seaside the "Mercury" hat was popular; it was a sort of "toquet," with two wings in the front, springing from an Alsatian bow, and the crown turned up at the back under a Catogan bow, in which was fastened a poppy, or a large "Reine Marguerite" or ox-eyed daisy.

In the autumn, the polonaise was succeeded by the tunic. Beaded, shining trimmings became more fashionable than ever. Open or flat collars took the place of frills. A small gold pencil-case was worn hanging from the watch chain.





Present fashions
1875 and 1876



HISTORY OF FASHION



Present fashions
1877 and 1878



CHAPTER XXXII.

FASHIONS OF THE PRESENT DAY.

1875 TO 1878.

Dinner, casino, and ball dresses in 1875—Importation of false hair—Manufacture in France—Modification of waterproofs—"Estelle" bonnets—Tunic aprons—Cuirass bodices—"Montespan" sleeves—"Saut-du-lit"—Shoes of past times—"Bonnes-femmes" pockets—Henri III. plumes—"Inez" veils—Ribbons and flowers—Heavy style of dress—"Pouf" petticoats—Composite fashions of 1876—Armenian toques; "Ophelia" bonnets; "Danichef" bonnets—Middle. Bettina Rothschild's wedding trousseau—A splendid parasol—Gondolier hair-nets—"Baby" sashes and "baby" bonnets—"Fontanges" fichus—Platitudes—Red, as a colour—Pockets of various kinds—A majestic appendage—Princess dresses—Bouquets on the bodices—Hair dressed in the Greek style—A thousand curls—Breton style—Organ-pipe frills—Coat bodices—Trinkets in black and silver.

WE have now reached the fashions of the present day, that is, the fashions that have prevailed from 1875 to 1881.

It will be well to divide this period into two parts, the first extending from 1875 to 1878, the second from 1878 to 1881.

What were the costumes worn at a dinner, casino, or ball in 1875?

We will describe a lady's gown made of sky blue Italian silk. The front of the skirt was trimmed with five flounces of antique lace, above which were full ruchings in two shades of blue, one shade being the same as that of the skirt, and the other rather darker. The upper skirt, widely open in front in order to display the splendid petticoat, formed an ample train at the back. A lace scarf fell gracefully over the folds of the costume. The edge of the tunic was trimmed with antique lace and ruchings. The bodice was cut low and square; the sleeves consisted entirely of ruchings and narrow lace, and reached to the elbow, where they were trimmed with two deep falls of lace—a most becoming finish.

The hair was dressed high with a Spanish comb, ribbons, and flowers.

We may mention here a curious fact that appears in the published accounts of the trade of Marseilles during the year 1875. 75,000 kilogrammes of hair, from the several countries of Asia Minor, Egypt, Hindostan, China, Italy, and Spain, entered France through that port. Formerly, as we have already stated, Brittany and Normandy supplied us with this article of commerce.

The manufacture of false hair in France amounted in 1875 to 130,000 kilogrammes, and was insufficient to supply the demands of fashion. The street-sweepings of hair, collected by the scavengers, were used for making luxuriant tresses of all lengths and all shades—blond, red, black, or brown.

Beaded and shining trimmings were very handsome, and much admired. Some were of totally new design, and were even preferred to lace.

In woollen fabrics, and with the exception of serge and limousine, women preferred “*chiné*” fancy mixtures, or striped materials of two shades.

Steel was again fashionable. Stomachers, berthes, and “*Louis XV. casaques*” were much worn; and the waterproof, so long the very tomb of elegance and grace, but the most convenient of garments, underwent such improved “*treatment*,” that no woman, old or young, need any longer object to shelter herself beneath it.

White bonnets, that had been absolutely proscribed for many years, came into fashion again for visiting dress. The “*Estelle*” bonnet was in cream felt, or in stiff white tulle, edged with white jet.

An expensive checked material, which cost fifteen to eighteen francs the yard, was used for gowns; and with these were worn apron tunics in Scotch plaid, and small “*Louis XIII.*” waistcoats with pockets. “*Flora*” bonnets in beige chip of two shades; “*Chevalier*” bonnets made of jet; “*Trianon*” bonnets in black chip, with a double bordering of Italian straw; and, lastly, maroon straw bonnets trimmed with showy “*François I.*” ribbon, were among the favourite shapes. Some of these bonnets looked like

real flower-beds, with their harmoniously blended heath, clematis, poppies, and daisies.

Cuirass bodices did not long remain in favour; they were succeeded by bodices with straight waistbands, and armour bodices cut low and square, and laced at the back. These bodices were embroidered, and edged with Mechlin lace.

"Montespan" sleeves were worn as a reminiscence of the seventeenth century; the material of which they were made was embroidered, and they ended at the elbow in two deep falls of Mechlin lace, with frills of crape lisse on the inside.

At home, ladies wore muslin "peignoirs" of a shape called "mobile;" or "saut-du-lit" (jump out of bed), an equally becoming garment, in fine nansook.

For morning dress they selected "Samoyède," or polar cloth; "Livonienne," or snow-flaked or gravelled cloth. Costumes made of these were trimmed with a wide braid to match, or with a band of velvet, and the skirts were trimmed apron-fashion in front. This was a step towards the revival of plain dresses.

Among other evolutions of fashion in 1875, the change in shoes was noticeable. Those shoes "à la poulaine," which I described when treating of the Middle Ages, were partially imitated by the new mode. Up to this time shoes had been made square at the toes; they were now made pointed; and some boots were made with the points curling upwards, in the same ridiculous fashion as under the Valois.

This retrospective caprice did not, fortunately, last long.

Gowns continued to be made with trains, with tight-fitting basques, and with large pockets called "ridicules," "aumônières," and "bonnes-femmes." A muslin flounce was placed inside the bottom of the skirt, coming a little below it; and the "balayeuse," as it was called, frequently excited the mirth of the passers-by in the streets.

Polonaises came in once more. They were made of dolgai, a warm, soft, thick, woollen material of a dull shade. Linen collars and cuffs, hem-stitched; kid boots, and beaver gloves were fashionable. Velvet-cloth mantles trimmed with monkey skin,

and black velvet semi-tight paletôts edged with skunk, were much worn.

A small bunch of yellow and white carnations, or of real rose-buds, was attached on one side of the bodice. Our French ladies wore necklaces of pearls and sapphires, and six-buttoned gloves.

A long, black, Henri III. plume was sometimes seen on bonnets; and bodices were made more and more in the style of the Middle Ages, until they strongly resembled the "corps piqués" of the time of Charles IX. "Inez" veils of Spanish blond, or of tulle trimmed with lace, and worn mantilla-fashion, afforded protection against the variations of climate. Some of the bonnets, made in the style of the Directory, were charming in shape; others were trimmed with figured silk of two shades, or of two colours mixed.

Fashions were borrowed from every period of French history. There were few original inventions, but many "reproductions," to borrow a theatrical term.

Ribbon was profusely used to ornament dresses; "Renaissance" ribbons, "armuré" ribbons, "surah" ribbons and braid, &c. Some of these were both plain and brocaded in jewel designs, and were so beautiful, that for a time they held supreme sway. The flowers, also, with which bonnets were loaded, were perfect imitations of nature; so much so, that the bonnets of 1875 may be regarded as masterpieces of art, and not only as reminiscences of the past.

Full-dress gowns had trains made with "Bulgarian" plaits, and bodices laced or buttoned at the back, so as to display the shape of the bust as defined by the cuirass. These dresses were trimmed with open-work embroidery, white guipure lace, and Russian lace. "Mikado," a very soft pale grey woollen mixture, slightly touched with black, obtained an extraordinary success.

Small Louis XIV. shoes, with two rosettes or puffs of ribbon, matched the costume. They reminded us of Mme. de Sévigné's letter to her daughter on sending her a pair of shoes of this kind. "I must inform you," she wrote, "that you are not to walk in

your new shoes." What an illustration of the saying: "*Il faut souffrir pour être belle.*"

Gold and silver braid was extensively manufactured. Mantles were trimmed with several rows of narrow silver braid; the buttons were very large, and of the same material as the garment; in the centre of each was a little design in filagree representing a lily or a small bell-flower. Buckles were also used in all full-dress costumes.

A heavy, rich, and handsome style of dress in damask, brocaded silk, or stamped velvet, was adopted in Paris and other great centres; yet more moderate costumes in neutral tints kept their place, the most fashionable of all dark materials being a reddish violet, bistre, mixed with black, and, above all, dark blue.

"Pouf" petticoats, or narrow dress-improvers, were made long enough to support the heavy folds of the gown.

In conclusion, it may be said that the long trains, the ornamented sleeves, and the tight bodices that combined reminiscences of the Middle Ages with the requirements of modern fashion, were principally remarkable for their details of all sorts—twists, fanciful arrangements, knots, bows, fringes, gold and silver braid, artistically carved buttons, and beautiful fur.

From the commencement of the year 1876, fashion became more and more of the composite order. Styles of every period were successfully blended. That of the reign of Henri II. was resorted to first. Gowns were made of sumptuous materials trimmed with Venice point, and with long trains. Figured silks, satin brocades in Arabesque designs, or flowers and foliage, were used for feminine attire, and looked to the full as splendid as the dresses of former times. Among head-dresses, the "Armenian toque" was very fashionable; then came the "Ophelia" bonnet in black lace, with two wreaths of rosebuds; and the "Danichef," in beaded black net, taken from the bonnet worn by one of the actresses in a play of that name, which was performed at the Odéon for more than a hundred successive nights.

The fashionable world was at that time greatly interested in the splendid wedding of Mdlle. Bettina Rothschild, which was described at length in all the newspapers. The trousseau included

under-garments worth 200,000 francs. The pocket-handkerchiefs were perfect marvels of needlework and Alençon and Mechlin lace. There were several magnificent cashmere shawls. Among the dozen and a half parasols, there was one deserving of particular mention. It was made of rose-coloured silk, shaded with white gauze, and again covered with point lace; the point was a cluster of emeralds and brilliants, and the handle was of jade, thickly encrusted with similar precious stones. A gold ring set with emeralds and brilliants was used to close this truly Oriental toy. The numerous fans comprised in the trousseau had been painted by our best artists.

I should need several pages for the bare enumeration of the contents of this young lady's jewel-case. I shall therefore content myself with naming a microscopic watch set in a solid piece of coral, with a chatelaine hook, and a triple gold chain, the hook bearing a baron's coronet, marvellously carved, surmounting the combined initials of the wealth-laden young couple.

I have digressed, I admit; but the digression is not out of place in a History of Fashion, for it proves that magnificent dress is as much appreciated under a Republic as under a Monarchy.

Moreover, at the period of Mdlle. Bettina Rothschild's marriage, luxury had reached the highest possible development. Never had more splendid textures been seen, and never had dressmaking been more ruinously expensive. A few young matrons belonging to the aristocracy announced their intention of opposing such excess in dress, but their project of returning to simpler fashions failed of realization, and they soon found themselves obliged, willingly or unwillingly, to float with the stream that was bearing them away.

At the Grand Prix de Paris, the leaders of fashion carried large carob-coloured sunshades, either plain or trimmed with cream lace, and shortly afterwards "caroubier" was quite the favourite colour. This deep red was worn in neckties, bonnets, and costumes, and combined with black, white, grey, or blue. But this fancy, like so many others, soon passed away.

Even in summer ladies wore large quantities of hair, stuffed into a wide-meshed net called a "Gondolier," which hung over their

neck and shoulders. This net was made of silk braid, and ornamented with two "Catogan" bows, one in front and one behind.

A novelty of this period deserves special notice. It consisted of long gloves of open-work China silk in all colours, of extraordinary fineness and elasticity, fitting to perfection. Another novelty, the "Baby" sash, worn round the waist and tied behind, was a fashion borrowed from little girls, whose "Baby" drawn bonnets and low shoes had already been copied by their elders.

The hair was dressed "à la Récamier," that is, curled all round; or in small rough curls like a poodle dog's; or hanging over the forehead in a fringe as far as the eyes, with a large chignon behind, and heavy Catogan bows.

Veils, whose real use is to protect the complexion from the sun, were worn tightly clinging to the face. They were stretched in folds over the forehead; this was to use the veil Egyptian-fashion.

Faus, which were in greater demand than ever, were suspended to one end of a silk girdle that was fastened with a slip knot round the waist, at the other end was a large silk tassel.

"Fontanges" fichus in chenille fringe were an improvement on the small knitted shawls that had been loosely thrown over the shoulders.

No change of any importance took place in costume. Gowns were still made to fit closely over the front and sides of the figure, and to drag at the knees, and even lower down. They resembled sheaths of the exact shape of the body. Flat braid trimmings were still much used, and were wittily called "platitudes." Skirts were trimmed with wreaths of leaves and flowers, many bodices were made of brocade, and many sleeves in the "Louis XV." style, with under-sleeves of crape lisse.

Among accessories I must not forget "dog-collars" in ribbon or quilled velvet, the edges bordered with narrow tulle illusion or blond.

Bonnets were very various in shape and trimming. Some very elegant women wore "jugulars" in feathers or fur, instead of

bonnet strings. A few bonnets were not unlike the leaning tower of Pisa.

Cashmere shawls regained their place. They were draped in the old classic way ; the bust being enveloped in soft folds, while the amplitude of the rest of the figure was, as is always the case, increased.

It is my duty as a scrupulous historian to note the predominance of "cardinal" or "carob" red in the costumes of 1876. Red sunshades, red feathers, and red frocks abounded everywhere. This caprice could not be enduring, and we must acknowledge that it soon passed away, to the great advantage of real elegance in dress. Light shades took the place of red, and also of dark blue. The most fashionable summer materials were jaconets with pink, pale blue, grey, and lime-tree coloured stripes, trimmed with Irish lace, thread fringe matching the gown, or kiltings and bias pieces of the stuff itself.

Walking dresses were made with simplicity and good taste. Mantles were large and long, and on the approach of autumn were made with wide "Mandarin" sleeves. Polonaises in light woollen materials, with velvet sleeves, were also fashionable ; and all woollen textures were in high favour. There was incredible variety in the shape of pockets ; besides those of which I have already spoken, there were "cornets," "hottes," and "corniers," all elegant articles of attire, beautifully made and embroidered, and fixed in various ways on the skirt.

Faille and brocades of different shades were used for full dress. Gowns were so tight, and so much "tied back," that they almost impeded movement ; the knees were encircled with garlands of flowers or buds. These flowers were succeeded by foliage, and there were more "Velledas" than "Floras" among our women of fashion, as was remarked by a clever journalist of the day. Metal buttons, at first enormously large, and afterwards reduced in size, and sometimes shaped like grélots (sledge bells), were used to ornament the costume. Skunk and Siberian fox took the place of Swedish and Canadian furs, temporarily out of fashion, while costly sable was worn by ladies of extreme elegance. A

pelisse lined with sable is like a costly piece of furniture, or a precious jewel; its value is not affected by any caprice of the day.

Breton lace was used in morning dress, and this charming novelty looked extremely well with the cascades of coloured ribbon that were so generally worn.

To bring this short review of the year 1876 to a conclusion, I must state that the type of costume was little altered; the only change was in trimmings, or in the greater or less length of trains. Costumes consisted principally of a scaffolding of flounces, fringes, and kiltings, without the great trailing mass that had long been a result of wide skirts. Trains became positive tails; but they no longer interfered with the free action of the limbs, and developed into what might be termed a majestic appendage.

Morning caps were made of white or coloured foulard handkerchiefs twisted like a Mamamouchi turban, and ornamented with a little bunch of mignonette, with a pale rose in the centre. There was something both sentimental and artistic about these caps.

But even when the same style of dress lasts from one year to another, or for several years, there is an absolute necessity for many variations of type; otherwise we should cease to be ruled by caprice, which, as we know, will never abdicate its power.

In January, 1877, princess gowns were still in fashion, the princess shape being preferred to all others, both for morning and evening wear. In the latter case, they were made high behind, and either cut low and square, or in a V shape in front, and with sleeves to the elbow only. The bodice and skirt of princess gowns were cut from one piece, but the skirt was ornamented with fringes, sashes, and bows, or it was worn over another and longer skirt.

Many mantles were made of the same material as the dress, and many were black.

Bouquets of small delicate roses were worn on the bodice, one at the breast, and the other just below the shoulder. Bonnets were chosen, as far as possible, to match the rest of the dress. Some women wore their hair in the Greek fashion, bound with three blue fillets, and a little fringe of loose curls on the forehead.

Towards March a decided change took place in the shape of costumes, and women looked like walking statues, clad in drapery that adhered as closely to the front and sides of the figure as a wet bathing-gown, while it was gathered into a bunch at the back. The portion of the skirt that formed the apron hung flat, but the rest was gathered in soft folds towards the back of the train. The bodice, whether cuirassed or not, assumed reasonable proportions.

The ungraceful costumes copied from those of the First Empire were at length about to disappear!

Muslin kiltings were once more restored to favour. The hair was dressed in the "thousand curls" of which Mme. de Sévigné speaks, giving the head a round shape, which admitted of no ornament save a flower on one side. This was a becoming style in many instances.

For ordinary wear, costumes in the Breton style were largely adopted; and also a costume in fawn-coloured Scotch cashmere, with a plain, short skirt, a tunic flat in front, but not drawn tight; the plastron, or stomacher, consisted of a wide embroidered band. With this costume two square pockets, one on either side, trimmed at two-thirds of their depth with three rows of narrow braid, were worn. The attire was completed by embroidered or open-worked linen collars and cuffs, and a cravat-bow of foulard, embroidered muslin, or plush ribbon, placed at the opening of the collar.

Some of our "élégantes" seemed determined to rival Henri Regnault's "Salome," on the pretext that yellow was a fashionable colour.

Large turn-down collars were revived; some were plainly stitched, and were wide and rounded in the back; others, for instance, the "Artagnan" and "Richelieu," were made of antique guipure; and others, again, of Renaissance lace—but all of them were very wide in the back.

Cuffs were worn on the sleeve itself, instead of on the arm.

The "blouse" gown, with full bodice and belt and buckle, was revived, with the addition of a second skirt. This costume was made in Oxford cloth, or light woollen textures, in foulard,

or in Irish cambric. Tussock also became fashionable again on account of the delicacy of its folds.

A new way of wearing a watch, fastened on the breast like a decoration, was adopted by ladies of fashion. This only applied, of course, to the smallest watches, those of the diameter of a twenty-franc piece, and which were usually emblazoned with the coat of arms.

Sunshades in plaid silk succeeded to red or yellow ones. Coloured glass beads were manufactured for trimming costumes; "Périchole" and "Fleur de Thé" bonnets were much worn; also Japanese hats lined with red silk, and trimmed with flowers or fruit on the brim. Dust-coloured fans were used. China crape was no longer despised, and Indian shawls remained in favour; lace was worn in profusion on every article of attire.

"Louis XIII.," "Louis XIV.," and "Louis XV." costumes, "Charles IX." collars, "Henri IV." ruffs, Marie-Antoinette, and "Directory" fichus, "Adelaide" collars of worked organdy muslin, trimmed with valenciennes,—all these things were adopted by Fashion, which, while it progressed with the times, made use of every style of dress belonging to the past.

I must not omit to mention tulle-ruchings called "organ-pipes," placed on the front of the skirt; white satin shoes with "Louis XV." heels; "Rubens" hats copied from those which we see in the portraits of that great master of the Flemish school, and some few hats in Russia leather; "Gabrielle" cuffs, and "Mousquetaire" collars, large cloaks lined and edged with fur; and lastly the "Pierrot" collars and cuffs, in plaited muslin, trimmed with Valenciennes, and fastened with bows of ribbon alike on both sides.

Gold and silver braid were quite out of fashion, and had been succeeded by trimmings of chenille or of stamped and cut-out velvet, sometimes placed on the edge of the garment and sometimes diagonally. Egyptian veils were very popular, and were, in Eastern fashion, crossed at the back, and tied in front. Sometimes they were tied in a large bow, framing the face very becomingly. It was considered good style to arrange the hair at

the back, "knocker-wise," or in graduated waves; the hat was placed on the top, and this fashion was both coquettish and extremely convenient.

The bonnet-strings, or "jugulars," in fur, chenille, or plaited ribbon, that had been so fashionable in the winter of 1876-7, were succeeded by strings of flowers.

On the whole, womens' garments were less narrow; and the excessively clinging "sheath" dresses disappeared. This was a great gain to freedom of movement and grace, for feminine attire should not sharply reveal the female form, but only indicate it. The charm of mystery ought to be retained, and the too much or too little of substance should be carefully concealed.

There was an obvious tendency towards greater simplicity in dressing the hair, enormous quantities of false hair being no longer worn, as they would have been out of harmony with the rest of the dress. The hair was sometimes divided in a slanting direction; or on the forehead with a second parting from ear to ear; or it was drawn back, Chinese fashion, and then divided into two loose twists crossed one over the other, and arranged something like a helmet above the forehead; or in rings on the forehead. Every style was admissible—plaits, curls, and straight or waved bandeaux.

In like manner, bonnets were worn of very different shapes—in coloured straw, or chip, and trimmed with roses, azaleas, eglantine, and rose-buds. The "plate"-bonnet was rather popular, as were also small bonnets in Belgian straw. I am now speaking of summer bonnets.

Feather aigrettes came once more into fashion.

The favourite textures were "Milan moss" and "swan's down." The favourite ribbon was that in the new colour called "pink-coral." Light-coloured belts, with gilt and inlaid buckles, and harmonizing with the colour of the dress, were very much worn. Jewellery was restricted to a simple bracelet, a "porte-bonheur," a locket, studs in the ears, and a white fan suspended to the wrist by a pink ribbon. A few ladies took to wearing Japanese trinkets. Long Swedish gloves with at least four or six buttons, and

“Charles IX.,” “Molière,” “Victoria,” and “Richelieu” shoes were adopted.

At the approach of winter, gowns and mantles were trimmed with fur: blue fox, marten, and sable were preferred; chinchilla and Astrakan came next in order. “Coat-bodices” partially revived the fashions of Louis XIII. and Louis XIV.; they were worn with long waistcoats, embroidery, cascades of lace, and gold braid. Plaited chemisettes fastening behind, were generally worn with square-cut bodices; also pocket-handkerchiefs in clear cambric and “Fritz” fichus.

The “La Vallière” cravat was succeeded by a longer one with square ends, and by the “Malesherbe” in silk guipure, or in guipure and grenadine. Nickel and strass buckles were extremely fashionable, and looked remarkably well with corded silk belts.

Dress stuffs had curious designations in the year 1877. For instance, “ventre-saint-gris,” a woollen texture with long rough hairy surface, in two shades of grey and green; “mousse-des-bois,” (wood moss); “frisé” (curled) “Malabar;” “frimas,” a speckled material; “chenillé velvet,” and “myosotis,” a mixture of wool and silk, speckled in two shades of blue, and in gold-colour. English velveteen now seemed to have reached its zenith of fashion.

I must note the very handsome muffs that made their appearance about the end of November. They were of small size, and made of cloth, velvet, or satin, lined and bordered with fur, and ornamented with a large ribbon bow. They were transformed into scent-sachets, perfumed with essences of heliotrope, rose, and gardenia.

A manufacturer of fans invented a fan composed of real flowers and leaves; but it was not a success, on account of the extreme fragility of such an article. Fans were then made of artificial flowers; but these too were a failure, for they sinned against good taste. And both were far inferior to mother-of-pearl, tortoise-shell, and ivory fans, either beautifully painted or trimmed with lace.

Costumes, bonnets, and mantles, were designated by Russian

names, doubtless on account of the war that had just broken out between Russia and Turkey. Otter-skin, fur, and plush hats were much worn. Flowers were "out," but feathers were "in," and the plumage of the "impeyan," the owl, the golden ouzel, and the gorgeous breast of the pheasant, were profusely employed. Jewelled ornaments were worn on bonnets, and double-headed pins in jet, gold, or pearl. "Sita" veils, and veils of mohair lace, with white and black shawls, mantles, "Marie-Antoinettes," and elegantly contrived headkerchiefs, served to shield the fair wearers from the cold winds of winter.

In December, a novelty made its appearance in the shape of ornaments, in *black silver*. These did not detract, however, from the value of coral, which became more and more fashionable every day, from that of old silver, filagree, or, especially, the old jewels, whether simple or rich, of past eras.





Present Fashions

Present Fashions

HISTORY OF FASHION

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FASHIONS OF THE PRESENT DAY (CONTINUED).

1878 TO 1881.

The International Exhibition of 1878—Foreign countries—Japanese fans—The little lace-makers of Peniche—Retrospective Exhibition of costume in France—" *Considérations sur le vêtement des femmes*," by M. Charles Blanc—Historical Exhibition at the Trocadéro—Comprehensive glance at the curiosities of that Exhibition—"The movement" in 1879—" *Merveilleuse*," " *Niniche*," and other bonnets—Plush—Gown-stuff at 100 francs the yard—Scarfs, casaques, and various bodices—Madras costumes—Under-clothing; chemise-corsets, morning-gowns—" *Housewife*" fans; fan-holders—Trinkets—New materials—Visites; jackets; bows; neckties—The year 1880—" *Cabriolet*" bonnets; " *passer-montagnes*"—The pilgrim costume—Satins—Favourite colours—Vests—Art buttons—Bulgarian costumes—Jerseys—Scented gloves—Flowers in profusion; a bridal bouquet—Midshipman bonnets—Nordenskiöld—Dust-cloaks—Revolution in bonnets—Art and fashion—" *Porte-veines*."

WE cannot doubt that the year 1878 will be famous in the long annals of Fashion, on account of the International and special Exhibitions that filled Paris with visitors from all parts of the world. In like manner, every civilized country deluged us with fanciful inventions, and with extraordinary ideas, that have for the most part vanished.

The galleries devoted to clothing were not less remarkable than those set aside for other industrial products, and yet the public soon wearied of them. They were so spacious, not to say encumbered; and then the attractions of the shop windows were as great as those of the galleries.

Some few however were popular. The cases of Lyons silks, St. Etienne ribbons, Tarara muslins, stuffs of Roubaix, Rouen, and Paris manufacture; and the charming Swiss pavilion, with its exquisitely arranged curtains, lace, tulle, embroidery, and trimmings, are not yet forgotten. The national costumes brought to Paris from the uttermost ends of the earth—from Lapland to the Cape

of Good Hope, from Oceania to the western extremity of Europe—excited a good deal of interest.

Every accessory of dress was at hand for the purposes of comparison by lady-connoisseurs. The East set before us its perfumes, coffers, shawls, tissues, and knick-knacks of all sorts, including the hinged fans, a Japanese invention, said to have been suggested by the wings of the bat. America displayed her products, remarkable rather for comfort than elegance; Africa, her garments dating from the most distant ages, and Europe showed us her undeniable superiority, her marvellous progress, and her new inventions, which, whether practical or not, are generally at least ingenious. I must except, as regards clothes, both Italy and Holland, while Russia was hardly remarkable except for her furs.

The manufacturers of lace in Portugal are treading in the steps of the English past-masters in that line, and are attaining the highest degree of excellence. The lace-workers lead a curious life. At Peniche, in Estramadura, there are eight schools of lace work. Little girls sometimes begin to learn at the age of four, and soon acquire such skill that they can handle fifty dozen spindles at a time, and yet pay attention to things quite apart from their habitual work.

Spanish gloves are even superior to those of Paris; but Spanish fans, although articles of such constant use on the far side of the Pyrenees, fail both in design and execution.

We must do justice to Greece, which now possesses numerous factories. The Greek hand-made coloured Oriental lace, is very pretty, and the national costumes charmed the eyes of all visitors to the Palace in the Champs de Mars. Unfortunately those splendid gold-embroidered garments are fast disappearing. Neither the king nor queen of Greece wear them at the present day. European fashions have usurped their place.

The subject of the International Exhibition of 1878, has already been exhausted; I could only add a few insignificant pages to the voluminous writings of other authors, who have described it; and I should besides be exceeding the limits of my subject. Hardly

had the portals of the building in the Champs de Mars been closed, when manufacturers were already inventing fresh novelties, which will be offered for our inspection at the next Great Exhibition.

The Exhibition of 1878 is now of historical value only. It was a great advance on preceding Exhibitions, and, according to the laws of human progress, will be surpassed by those of the future.

Before 1878 however, and while I was occupied in writing the present work, some artists and other intelligent men had organized a Retrospective Exhibition of costumes in France, in the building of the Champs Elysées.

This was far from being an exhaustive exhibition, for it did not include the earlier ages of our history, nevertheless, curiosities that had hitherto been hidden away in private collections became known to the public, and were of special interest because they afforded specimens of several branches of the ancient manufactures of France.

That exhibition was a fragment of the history of Fashion in concrete form, if I may so express myself, and many of those who inspected it were of opinion that it was a tempting subject for a writer.

On the other hand, M. Charles Blanc included in his important work on Decorative Art, published by the "*Gazette des Beaux-Arts*," some very valuable remarks on feminine clothing, under the title of "*Considérations sur le vêtement des femmes*;" for these maintained that the three invariable conditions of beauty are order, proportion, and harmony, whatever may be the variety of costume.

The learned academician raised coquetry to the height of a true art; he treated of the æsthetics of Fashion, and pointed out its constituent laws.

The public, whose attention was thus directed to the subject of the present work, was more alive than formerly to its importance, and seemed favourably disposed towards our undertaking.

In 1878, there was an Historical Exhibition at the Trocadéro.

Antique garments of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were exhibited, not as curiosities only, but as subjects for study.

The show-cases of MM. Tassinari and Chatel, of Lyons, contained fine tapestries, chasubles, copes, women's hoods, and a large assortment of Eastern fabrics. Five or six amateurs exhibited collections of dress ornaments,—bracelets, rings, pins, broaches, earrings, &c. There was a prettily-dressed doll, in the complete costume of a young girl in the time of the Medicis; several antique bag and purse clasps; carved, gilded, and chased betrothal rings and perfume boxes; marriage caskets; women's hawking-gauntlets in chased steel; exquisite fans; diamonds in settings of old silver; curious Norman trinkets; patch-boxes ornamented with miniatures; bon-bon boxes; and needle-cases.

Several pieces of stuffs from Equatorial Egypt, and quantities of ancient Egyptian jewellery, with a few valuable ornaments dating from the time of the Caliphs, were worthy of careful examination, and might have roused the emulation of our modern workmen.

The Scandinavian Ethnological Museum of Stockholm, forwarded a series of costumes remarkable for accuracy; almost all of these had been composed in the year 1820, or thereabouts: these curious specimens obtained a great and deserved success.

When the time arrived for closing all these exhibitions, and the French and foreign exhibitors had removed their goods, there remained an enduring recollection of the marvels of the Trocadéro and the Champs de Mars.

After that time, exclusively national Fashion resumed its customary course. A great incentive had been given by the numerous and distinguished awards conferred on our manufacturers. Novelties of all sorts were produced, and spread throughout Paris, France, Europe, and beyond the seas. Our milliners sent their goods to the International Exhibitions at Sydney and Melbourne. Their superiority and originality were admitted on all hands.

Meanwhile, savings had been almost or entirely expended, and in 1879 a diminution of outlay on dress resulted from the extra expenditure of the preceding year.

“Merveilleuse” bonnets, which, being indicated by their name need no description from me; “Madrilène” bonnets, made of otter, or plush, trimmed with jet; and Swedish bonnets in black kid, with an amber-headed pin, partly concealed in a tuft of feathers, or stuck through a velvet bow, were equally fashionable.

Many bonnets were entirely composed of leaves, flowers, or fruits. There were infinite varieties of bonnets and hats, some close, others with wide brims, some very small, and some very large. “Frondeuse” hats, were of black straw, with long black and ruby plumes, the brim turned up, and lined with puckered ruby satin, trimmed with gold lace. “Niniche” and “Directory” bonnets were lasting favourites, and more generally popular than their merits would appear to warrant.

During the summer, round bell-shaped hats were at first preferred. Then close bonnets without strings, cottage bonnets in smooth straw, coming down very much on the forehead; “Nérine” hats of coarse white straw, and with wide brims lined with red satin; and many others, differing little from those I have just named.

Plush was worn as trimming on gowns and mantles. Short dresses were much worn; they were invariably trimmed with cascades of lace. Silk stockings were indispensable. Bows and cravats of muslin, or Breton lace, or valenciennes, or point, were greatly used. Gloves with four buttons, and “dowager” sun-shades—so called because they were rather large and made with long sticks—were quite a rage for several months. “Bonhomme,” “Jardinier Galant,” “Louis XIV.,” and “Louis XV.” vests, formed a part of nearly every costume. “Charles IX.,” “Marion Delorme,” and “Richelieu” shoes were made with high heels like boots.

In order to give some idea of the cost of certain materials, it will suffice to state that an actress at the Vaudeville theatre wore a gown at a hundred francs the yard, and the rest in proportion. Gowns were made of gold tissue and trimmed with lace, embroidered in colours.

Scarfs or drapery were fashionable for trimming dresses, and skirts were plaited “à la religieuse.” The scarfs were sometimes

crossed so as to form a tunic. Many "casaques" were made with waistcoats. Bodices were made full, something like the old-fashioned bodices "à la Vierge." There was quite a rage for knotted fringes with beads, and natural flowers for ball-dresses; but double tunics were gradually abandoned, though square-cut bodices and "Louis XV." sleeves were still worn.

Handkerchief-dresses, consisting entirely of Madras handkerchiefs, were very artistically composed. I saw one in which seventy-two handkerchiefs had been employed; another, in a simpler style, consisted of forty-eight only. The plainest gown required four dozen. This was a whimsical fashion, and was followed only by the most elegant women of society.

Frills and platings of lawn or muslin were much worn. Luxury was carried to a great height in "lingerie" (underclothing). The "Mireille" was a high chemisette of muslin and valenciennes, with a double frill; the "Yvonne" was of crape and Breton lace; the "Medicis," a still more elegant chemisette; the "Lamballe," a fichu of surah trimmed with plaits of black or white Breton lace, and the "Marie Thérèse" of "point d'esprit" tulle with frills of Breton lace.

Corset-chemises made with gussets were most favourably received, and were included in every wedding trousseau, as were also white muslin morning-gowns, which were found very convenient for home wear.

The "housewife's" fan, which came out in 1879, held thread, scissors, and needles. Fan-holders were made of silver or of nickel silver, with a long or short chain, according to the taste of the wearer.

Those fashionable trinkets, the lizard, the fly, and the bee, were laid aside, and were succeeded by an owl. This was used as a brooch to fasten the bonnet strings. Tags, girdles, "Diane de Poitiers" necklaces of very small pearls, jet in every shape, crosses of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and locketts of antique design, were very fashionable; as were also Brittany, Normandy, and Vendée crosses, with religious emblems of the Sacred Heart or St. Michael.

The nomenclature of the new stuffs is bewildering. There was "Osaka" crape, and "Æolian," a mixture of wool and silk; there was honey-combed beige of two shades; "annamite" crape; "grene" and "Pompadour sateens" for "Louis XV." costumes; jaconets with satin stripes and Indian prints; Watteau material; pekings in two shades, and "Pompadour" foulards; striped grenadines and Italian silk; Turkish, Egyptian, Indian, Japanese, and Persian stuffs, embroidered in silk, gold beads, and even in precious stones and glistening colours; and lastly, materials with the grotesque names of "Tchilka," "Ladakh" cloth, "Sutlej," "Lahore," "crépon," and "Tchinab."

Paniers, quite unlike those of the eighteenth century, were composed of the material of the gown, arranged in draped folds on the hips, and hidden at the back by the folds of the skirt. They were trimmed with kiltings and lace, for evening wear, and sometimes even with flowers. Stamped velvet casaques, or shawl-pattern casaques, were frequently worn with dresses of plain material. We must also note "Marie Christine visites," "Catherine de Russie houppelandes," jackets, coats, paletot-jackets, and "Montespan" bodices. For walking in the country, the alpaca braid usually put at the edge of the skirt was sometimes replaced by a deep band of black leather, from which a damp sponge and a dry cloth effectually removed all trace of mud.

What a number of charming bows! "Butterfly," "Figaro," and "Colbert" bows; "Marion" shirt-frill bows, and "Yolande" bows, in "merveilleux" satin, and cockades of lace. The "new" bow, consisting of surah very delicately gathered, was prettily trimmed with lace. And what a number of exquisite cravats! viz., the "Louis XIII.," the "Royal," the "Girondist," the "Diana," the "Soubise," and the "Haydée."

The year 1880 opened inauspiciously in the midst of the terrible winter that had begun in December 1879. The fashions of January were consequently all for warm and thick materials, for furs, warmly lined shoes, india-rubber overalls, lined with stout flannel, that were drawn over the foot and boot, and enabled the wearer to brave both the snow and the subsequent thaw. The

old-fashioned "cabriolet," or drawn-hoods, were revived ; they could be worn either over a bonnet or without one. They were generally made of otter-plush. "Mazarin" capes came into fashion at the same time, and even "passe-montagnes" enjoyed a momentary favour.

"Pilgrim" costumes were worn : their name sufficiently describes them.

Brighter weather at last succeeded to the intense frosts and fogs, and gracious Fashion resumed its sway, first with the "jupon intime," a very narrow petticoat clinging closely to the figure, and then with gowns of velvet and otter satin. Next came ball-dresses,—late in the season certainly, but appreciated all the more eagerly because dancing parties had for two long months been unusually rare. The world began to take its revenge on winter.

Black satin was extremely fashionable ; and the "Danæ" costume in white satin was simply exquisite. Costumes in light cloth or double cashmere were very popular. The list of new materials is completed by "Renaissance," "sublime," and "down-satin" (duvet), "white Astrakan down," "voile-de-veuve," and "brilliantine." Madras costumes were universally worn in summer.

The favourite colours were, lotus-blue, Van Dyck red, the shade called "chaudron," otter, mandragora, a sort of undecided blue-green called Venetian heliotrope, and others. Generally speaking, costumes were no longer made in one material and one shade only. Plum-colour, otter, Russian green, and moss-colour were mingled together ; and gowns were made of faille and satin, or satin and velvet, of silk and wool, and all kinds of materials with designs. Cut and damasked materials, and, above all, the fashion of kilting withstood various efforts to abolish them.

Jet capes were much worn ; also open "Medici" collars, partly turning over, and, generally speaking, very graceful.

Large collars—"Dauphin," "King of Rome," "Colette," and "Incroyable"—were fashionable ; also cravats, consisting of cascades of lace and very wide ribbon ; and light and delicate scarfs.

"Vests" were much worn, both by married women and young

ladies. The "Oriental" vest was of red-gold or olive-coloured tissue. They were pointed at the sides, coat-shaped at the back, trimmed all round with a thick cord, and fastened from top to bottom by artistic or shawl-patterned buttons; lace frills were worn at the throat and sleeves. The "Breton" vest needs no description; this was as popular as the "Oriental;" whereas the "Bulgarian" costume, with its closely-fitting bodice, its skirt quite plain in front, open at the sides, and put into very narrow plaits at the back, was considered by most women too remarkable. The elastic, or "Jersey," bodice must also be mentioned.

Gloves were scented with cedar of Lebanon, or Russia leather, or violets. This was no new invention. Perfumed gloves were worn in the sixteenth century. In the "Winter's Tale," Shakespeare tells us of "gloves as sweet as damask roses."

Fans were painted by excellent artists. Sunshades were large, and, generally speaking, lined; with long sticks and handles of Dresden, Sèvres, or Longwy china. They were closed by means of a ring.

Flowers were used in profusion both to decorate rooms, and for personal wear. Every one was endeavouring to make amends for the bitter winter. A newspaper reporter described the bride's bouquet at a wedding, which took place at the Trinité. It consisted entirely of rare and beautiful flowers, and was nearly two yards in circumference. A "page of honour" bearing this poetic burden, preceded the bride.

The following bonnets were produced in succession; bonnets with wide strings in piece-surah; "Niniche" bonnets, already described, and somewhat resembling a helmet in the front, "Amazon," "Devonshire," "Récamier," "Duchesse d'Angoulême," "Olivia," and "Princess of Wales" hats; "Croizette" hats; and lastly the "midshipman"—a travelling-hat in straw, the same colour as that of the costume, and simply trimmed with a double or treble Alsatian bow.

All bonnets were profusely trimmed with feathers and flowers, with dead-gold poppies, laburnum, tulips, gardenias, magnolias, and bachelor's buttons, and especially with roses of every shade.

During the summer, "sets" for the neck of surah and foulard were very fashionable. Here I may specially mention the "Jean Bart," consisting of a widely-opened sailor collar, deep cuffs, and a simply-knotted neck-tie; the "Chantilly," in ivory surah, trimmed with Alençon point; the "Pomponne," in plain, spotted, or sprigged foulard; the "naval officer" bow, in spotted foulard; and the "miller's wife" fichu, in Indian muslin.

Nordenskiöld, the Swedish Navigator, and the discoverer of the north-east passage, came to Paris, where he was received with all the honours due to him. Gauze travelling veils, called "Nordenskiölds," two yards long, and trimmed with fringe, were worn in honour of the illustrious foreigner, and all but supplanted the "merveilleux" tulle veils spangled with gold, and the "odalisques," of red tulle. The latter were very striking, but were only becoming to dark women.

For mountain-climbing expeditions, very fine, small-meshed hair-nets called "arachnéens" or cobweb nets, which kept the hair perfectly neat, were very useful. Dust-cloaks in grey cashmere, or alpaca, called "capucins," were lined with red or striped surah, and were made with peaked hoods lined in the same way.

The Art Exhibition in 1880 led to a complete revolution in buttons; they were manufactured according to all the antique models. Those called "Buffon," were remarkable for elegance. Others consisted of real flowers, or insects enclosed in glass; and lastly the "Wedgwood" buttons offered the most exquisite miniature paintings to our delighted gaze, i.e. copies of paintings on china by that celebrated English artist and manufacturer of the eighteenth century.

During 1880, Fashion frequently borrowed her inspiration from Art, and sought to imitate the works of the old masters. Antique designs, stuffs, and lace of every kind, were constantly reproduced. More than one duchess was the image of some figure of the Middle Ages, more than one "bourgeoise" dressed herself like Margaret, in *Faust*, or draped her shoulders in the "camail Régence." In wet weather women of all ranks put on

Ulsters, or Derbys, a cloak made of flannel, or light cloth. They resigned themselves to wearing hoods, when at the sea-side or in the country. "Savoyard" and "Trianon" costumes were alternately fashionable.

Feathers were much used on bonnets, and flowers on the bodices of dresses, and even on shoes and sunshades. A wreath of flowers was sometimes worn as a necklace by young girls. Canadian otter fur was in such request that the supply was exhausted, and plush of the same colour was used as a substitute.

An ugly trinket, euphemistically designated a "porte-veine" (luck-bringer), was introduced from Austria. This represented in fact, St. Anthony's companion, the pig, and its rivals were the wild boar, the hippopotamus, and the elephant. It was hung on bracelets, mounted on pins, and worn on the watch-chain. For my own part, I should certainly have preferred the commonest field flower to such an ornament, even if made of diamonds. Nor am I singular in my opinion; but, as I have said before, opposition is powerless against the stream of Fashion, when it bears along the majority of our "élégantes," who are resolved not to be daunted by any absurdity. The "porte-veine" is still in existence, in spite of the disappearance of St. Anthony's companion.

During the winter of 1880-81, handsome, and frequently historic costumes continued to be worn. In our engraving of one in the style of the Directory, the skirt and bodice are of plum-coloured velvet; the second skirt is in plaited *merveilleux* satin, and is crossed by a sash of ribbed velvet, hanging down at the back. The bonnet, which is high in front, is trimmed with feathers.

M. Worth has kindly supplied us with the design of this costume.



CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONCLUSION.

I HAVE now reached the conclusion of my History of Fashion. The present belongs to my readers, and to the "Magasin des Demoiselles" appertains the task of continuing my work, by keeping its subscribers informed of the innovations in every department of feminine attire in France.

Have I fulfilled the task which I undertook? Have I succeeded in imparting some interest to the subject of my researches?

I venture to hope so; for I have ever borne in mind that the triviality of my subject was no bar to serious reflections on special points, nor to the moral value of the whole work.

The "History of Fashion" offers to view one aspect of our own civilization, and I shall esteem myself fortunate if, without exceeding the limits of my work, I have been able to restore the curious details, the extraordinary garments, in a word, the varied attire of Frenchwomen from the most distant times to the present day, from the women of Gaul to our own contemporaries.

This being said, let me now say a few words on the general conclusions to be drawn from the details I have given; let me glance back at the path by which we have travelled.

It is quite certain that the mode of dress, especially from the seventeenth century, reflects pretty accurately the ideas of the period during which each particular style has been in favour.

During the Renaissance, we have seen Italian elegance introduced into the court of Francis I., while that of Henri II. gave an artistic finish to society, and removed from Frenchwomen—and consequently from Frenchmen—the last traces of that rusticity which

had prevailed throughout the Middle Ages, and which had found its only exceptions in the noble ladies residing in their castles, who sought by boundless luxury to mark the difference between themselves and women of inferior degree.

Under Louis XIV., Fashion ruled as a true despot, according to the code of etiquette. "There are no regulations in convents," writes Mme. de Maintenon, "so strict as those which are imposed upon the great by court etiquette."

The Sun-King (Louis XIV.) regulated, with few exceptions, every variation in dress. Costumes of ceremony were made to harmonize with the drawing-rooms of Versailles.

But when the reign of Louis XIV. was over, more freedom was allowed to individual taste, and the grandiose gave place to a lighter style. Nothing was worn but gauze, gold and brocade, mythological négligés, white satin skirts, and refined ornaments.

A comparative simplicity became fashionable, and ladies laid aside their grandest attire.

The new style of dress suited the "roueries" of the Regent, and the fêtes given by Mme. de Tencin and other fine ladies who threw open their drawing-rooms to the devotees of Fashion, and it was appropriate to the perfumed boudoirs of the time.

Towards the middle of the eighteenth century we remark the prevalence of the loose gowns depicted by Watteau in his exquisite pictures. They are free, flowing, and open, something like dominoes. His lovely "marquises" wear flower-embroidered slippers without heels, and with the points turned up. Gowns were worn so low on the shoulders, and bosom, as to be indecent.

Next come the excesses of a "loud" style of dress, hoops that are still more extravagant than the vertugadins of old time, and the falbala. Great ladies must dazzle, they must show the common folk that they possess quarterings of nobility. They must prove that they made millions in the Rue Quincampoix.

Dust must be thrown in the eyes of the world, a kind of consideration must be obtained by display, if not merited by worth, talent, and ability. One sort of "dust" was hair-powder, which may serve as a type of the pretences of its time.

Luxury attained fabulous proportions. Four thousand jays were sacrificed for the trimming of one dress ; Mme. de Mategnon settled a life-annuity of 600 francs on her dressmaker, in payment for one gown. The Duchesse de Choiseul's dress surpassed anything that had ever been seen. "It was of blue satin," says Horace Walpole, "trimmed with marten fur, covered with gold, and sprinkled with diamonds. Each diamond shone from the centre of a silver star, set in a gold spangle." Many families might have lived in comfort on the cost of that costume. But who thinks of the poor ? Is there not the "hospital" to receive them ?

All this display and luxury indicated the degeneracy of the time, and certain philosophers rebuked the fine ladies, at the risk of being set down as ill-tempered pedants, birds of ill-omen, and prophets of evil. But the "petits marquis," or fine gentlemen, entered the lists in defence of the "petites marquises," or fine ladies, who laughed at rebukes and philosophy alike.

A reaction, the inevitable consequence of long-continued excess, set in at the end of the eighteenth century.

Farthingales vanished, and scarcely a trace of powder could be discerned on the hair, which was no longer perfumed. The most elegant among Parisian women did not hesitate to wear flat shoes, as a protest against high heels. Both men and women clothed themselves "à la Jean-Jacques-Rousseau."

They openly renounced affectation, and sought from Nature her perennial adornments, and her matchless charms.

Then the Revolution of 1789 broke out. With a crash the past fell to the ground, and tastes, instincts, and manners were changed by an irresistible force ; no longer were the reminiscences of the old Monarchy evoked, but those of the Greek and Roman Republics, and Frenchwomen endeavoured to copy the customs of those two nations, and chose to dress themselves like the women of antiquity.

Nor did they give up their ideas even under the First Empire. All the little attractions, and graces, of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were non-existent for our modern Cornelias, for the disciples of Sappho, and the imitators of Lucretia.

There were no original ideas; nothing but recollections, and imitations, and the poorest copies. When we borrow from antiquity, we seldom do so successfully, there are generally discrepancies which destroy all the meaning of the original.

After the fall of the First Empire at Waterloo, the fifteen years of the Restoration and the eighteen years of the July Monarchy witnessed a return to monarchical customs, and to ancient habits. Fashion "restored" the Middle Ages, and the attire of the "châtelaines," and, as we have shown, Romanticism in Literature and Art was exemplified in dress.

At this period, the middle classes, after struggling against authority, assumed in their turn the reins of government, and dress was greatly influenced by "bourgeois" tastes. Romanticism gradually disappeared, and the prevailing fashions were entirely distinct from the art and literature of the period.

Nobody can now recall the gowns with leg-of-mutton sleeves, without laughing, and the bonnets of the period closely resembled the hoods of cabriolets.

The revolution of 1848, left no trace on the history of dress. But after the establishment of the second Empire, the splendour of the new court recalled the days of the Regency and those of the Directory combined. A craving for display turned the heads of all, and Frenchwomen became conspicuous in the eyes of Europe, by a succession of lavish, and unbridled whims. In vain did certain philosophers once again protest against such immoderate luxury.

At length, after the disasters of 1870, a more chastened spirit appeared to prevail, and former follies to have passed away; simplicity was aimed at, as it had been in 1780. But this calm was of short duration, and in a very short time new fashions and passing fancies were as prevalent as ever.

In proportion as France became once more self-reliant, her government stable, and her finances prosperous, the love for fine clothes spread among women of every rank, and the International Exhibition of 1878, having produced the immense effect we have already noted, an era of cosmopolitanism was inaugurated, and certain

peculiarities of fashion were borrowed from the most distant nations.

This is the point we have reached, as I pen these lines.

As the logical sequence of the above short recapitulation, let me again repeat that good taste must be the arbiter of dress, and that good taste exacts harmony in every part of the costume, secondary or principal. The original type of dress has not changed, and probably will change but little; but its subordinate parts will undergo continual alteration, and will afford to future historians a subject of study, if at a later period they too desire to give Fashion its rightful place, in a picture of the manners and customs of France.



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